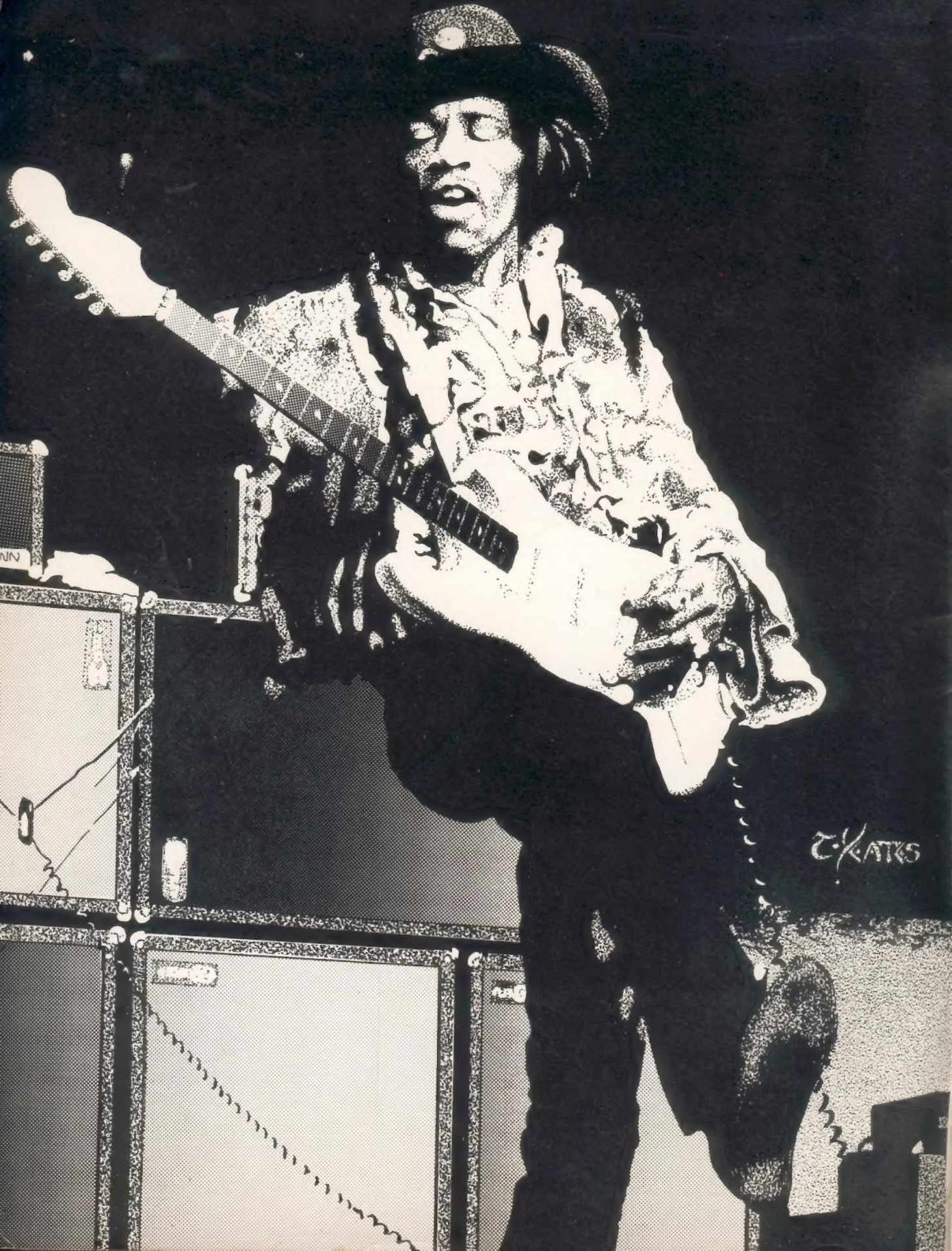
INFINITY FIVE - 1973


C. KATES

THE
CRYPTICS

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EDITORS
Adam Malin Gary Berman

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Doug Murray Gary Feldman

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Mike Kaluta, Larry Todd, Berni Wrightson, Esteban Maroto, Frank Brunner, Al Williamson, Vaughn Bode, C. Lee Healy, Steve Harper, Gray Morrow, Kelly Freas, Roy Krenkel, Neal Adams, Richard Corben.

PHOTOS
Jan Strnad
Bruce Mittelman

INFORMATION
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Contributions welcomed, can not be returned.

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Special thanks to Jan Strnad and Gary Feldman

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NOTES FROM THE EDITORS

It has become increasingly apparent to us that *Infinity* has reached maturity; in this vein, we present to you *Infinity Five*. With this issue we include Richard Corben in our list of in-depth interviews, bringing the total now to ten. (Bill Gaines, Jim Warren, Frank Frazetta, Berni Wrightson, Frank Brunner, Jeff Jones, Bruce Jones. Mike Kaluta, Steve Harper, and finally Corben.) With the help of Jan Strnad, who conducted the Corben interview, *Infinity* has brought deep segments of Corben's personality and style to our pages. We have with this issue begun greater exploration of the color medium than previously. Interior color is something we have long hoped for and have finally achieved. We have also added high quality paper and finer printing to enhance our magazine.

There is an increasing awareness in the media of the lack of high quality prozines. Although it is an artform both admired and disdained, it is the format we choose to publish under, and with the possible exceptions of Doug Murray's *Heritage* and Kenneth Smith's *Phantasmagoria*, the pro-artzine is a dying breed. This trend is not a beneficial one. A major criticism put upon the prozines is their extravagance; in one aspect, they are indeed. Prozines are the only fanzines in the field to fully exploit the artistic and technological assets of high quality printing. Money is not a crutch if it can be distinguished from merit; if an artist does not deserve fair compensation for his time and effort, we are laboring under false standards. Those who say we exploit professionalism need to be reminded that their inevitable goal is just that. *Infinity* does not seek to be controversial, but merely to be what it is — an artistic extension of both ourselves and the field. If that includes the fullest capitalization of professional printing and artwork standards, it is only to fulfill our needs.

While many have grown disenchanted with the field, and a general sense of apathy reigns over us, we feel this trend will change with the passing of time. Fandom would seem to work much the same as the business cycle. Now is the time when the striving new blood of the field must begin to cultivate a professional fanzine market as such we attempted to do just five years ago.

In keeping with tradition we have once more presented this issue our regular items — *Viewpoints, Notes From The Editor*, and Creation coverage. Our feature articles include Doug Murray's excellent analysis of the ill-fated Broadway show, *Warp*, including illustrations by Neal Adams, the art director for the presentation. Jan Strnad provides another fictional piece following the one in *Infinity Four*, and we also present a portfolio of Al

X-71

Williamson sketches from the EC period up until the early 1960's. While some of these sketches are mere doodles, Al Williamson's flowing and decorative line adds an extra special touch to our book.

And how we got the Todd po.tfolio to be so tight, only Larry knows.

Of course we have also employed multiple color corrected pieces using an exceptionally good lithographer. Reproduced in black and white but from color originals are five pages of detailed Esteban Maroto artwork. Esteban's work continues to progress at a fantastic pace, and we are glad that he has finally made his appearance in our pages. The final special feature is an amusing two page strip by Frank Brunner, a past *Infinity* cover artist and interview subject.

Many things have occured since our last issue. It would not be fair for us not to acknowledge Heritage's debut, nor the tremondous resurging popularity of the EC cult. Bill Gaines, possibly spurred by the EC convention, finally released the first EC artwork to be reproduced in comic format once more. Playboy magazine discovered it was not alone, with the birth of Gallery, F. Lee Bailey's impressive Playboy ripoff. Warren kept changing. Shazam! and the same Captain Marvel of twenty years ago was reborn. But perhaps most important, was that of the talent unleashed in the underground comix field—headed by the spectacular visual graphics of Richard Corben, the undergrounds reached unprecedented heights of quality.

Fiscal year 72-73 brought its regular batch of conventions as well. July saw Phil Seuling's convention — both enjoyable and hectic. Following in November was Creation II, proving that the fields of science fiction and comicdom could be united, if only for three days. In February, the annual Star Trek contigent landed at the Hotel Commodore for four days manned by the inimitable talents of huckster Al Schuster. The convention was most notable for its mass crowd, a conservative estimate being *five thousand people*, and the appearance of several of the Star Trek stars (including Leonard Nimoy). The newspaper, TV, and magazine coverage given this event was encouraging to the field.

Looking a bit brighter is the television media whose announcement of the oncoming show, Starlost was received warmly. *Twilight Zone, The Outer Limits,* and *Alfred Hitchcock* were returned to New York programming for the first time in several years, allowing a new cult of S-F and horror freaks to sprout. On the movies — the most notable new efforts to appear since Infinity Four have been *A Clockwork Orange, Silent Running* and *The Godfather.* EC came to the movies with *Tales From The Crypt,* and *Vault of Horror.* And who could forget *Fritz The Cat?*

We welcome your opinions, comments, and suggestions on this issue and the future. Please-write! Take the time, after you finish this issue, and write to us. Contributions are welcomed — but they cannot be returned.

Infinity Four is still available. In case you've forgotten the issue contains — full color oil paintings by Richard Corben and Larry Todd serving as covers, and interior unpublished finished artwork by Jeff Jones, Berni Wrightson, Frank Brunner, Gray Morrow, Mort Ducker, Robert Kline, Roy Krenkel, Frank Frazetta, Joe Schuster, Mike Kaluta, Howard Chaykin, Al Williamson, Morris Scott Dollens, Joe Sinnott, and Steve Harper. Interviews are conducted with Mike Kaluta and Steve Harper, Mike Kaluta and Mort Drucker provide strips. Frank Brunner shines in a five page folio of fine-line ink illustrations, Gray Morrow is also represented with a portfolio. Comix editor Jaxon reports on Underground Comix, A Phenomenon as he calls it; Creation Con 1971 is reviewed by the con chairman, and an EC classic, "A New Beginning" by Al Williamson/Frank Frazetta is reprinted. Jan Strnad offers a fictional story entitled, *Island Fable.* It's 84 pages total, professionally typed and bound — and the price is $3.00. If you don't have a copy, why not pick one up now? Order from Gary Berman, 197-50F Peck Avenue, Flushing, N. Y. 11365.

Due to the time factor, there is no way of predicting if and when Infinity Six will be out (suprise!). We have many different ideas for it, and we feel we can get it out by July, 1974. The price will be kept at a stable $3.00, so if you want to do us a favor and help speed things along, send in that $3. We realize you will have to wait awhile for the issue, but your $3 helps to support us in acquiring material for #6.

That's it for this issue; special thanks to Strnad and Corben for their continuing support and to Neal Adams for the illustrations accompanying the Warp article. Also — a hearty thank you goes to Doug Murray for his continued help with this publication, and Gary Feldman, for the same. These two are the greatest.

Peace

Adam Malin

Gary Berman

CREATION — on the move to a bigger and better convention than ever before. We're moving the dates to January 4th to 6th (for this year only, next time we'll be back at Thanksgiving). And we're moving to the world famous Hotel Biltmore on Madison Avenue at forty-third Street. The entire nineteenth floor of this exquisite hotel, as well as portions of the floor will accommodate our one hundred and thirty table huckster's area, our huge auditorium housing scores of exciting events, and several display and art exhibit rooms.

You won't want to miss our innovative program of discussions featuring top professionals in the field of comic and Science Fiction artwork. (A few of the over thirty guests who attended last year include Al Williamson, Vaughn Bode, Jim Steranko, Neal Adams, Jeff Jones, Kelly Freas, Philip Joseph Farmer, Isaac Asimov, Bill Gaines, Wally Wood, Frank Brunner, Mike Kaluta, Ron Goulart.) We promise you surprises, and no one will be disappointed with our guest roster. You'll marvel at our single and collective art displays featuring oils and/or black and whites by the finest graphic illustrators in America, and you'll capture great bargains at our two no-minimum bid auctions. You'll be witness to a collection of the finest in horror and S-F movies (in fact our film show was commended by the 1973 Priceguide). You'll hear and see informative and enjoyable discussions, panels, slide shows, and question and answer sessions with our guests. Of course at this early time (July 1973) specific details can not be offered; we'll keep you posted with progress reports if you register in advance. In any event be on the lookout for our extensive advertising in the trade magazines of the field.

*MEMBERSHIPS—3 days—Advance—$4
3 days—At door—$5
2 days—Advance—$3
Single day—At door—$2 per.

Advance registrations receive tickets and several progress reports featuring unpublished professional artwork — all in advance of the con. Why not save some money, help support the con, and save a wait on line at the door, by registering right now!

*DEALERS — Creation is *the* place to buy, sell and swap and we've proved that in the last two years. In fact Creation is known as a dealer's convention and each year we've topped the previous convention record for dealer's tables at a gathering. Tables are $30 each for a three day period, locations granted on a first come first serve basis — let us know if you want wall space. Fact sheets will be sent out before the convention.

*HELP US — If you can distribute our brochures please let us know. Students in colleges close to the NYC area are especially appreciated. Thank you.

*SEND ALL FEES, ADVICE, LETTERS to Adam Malin, 16E. 2nd St. Freeport, N.Y. 11520/Convention chairmen—Adam Malin and Gary Berman.

A PORTFOLIO of WATERCOLORS by
E. MAROTO

ESTEBAN
MAROTO

ESTEBAN MAROTO

AN INTERVIEW WITH RICHARD CORBEN

INTERVIEW WITH RICHARD CORBEN by Jan S. Strnad

Introduction

I owe Richard Corben a lot. He kept the ailing ship *Anomaly* afloat for one issue longer after my key artist gafiated, and he helped me sneak into the underground comic book field — the publishers had to take my stories if they wanted Rich's artwork. He also got me kicked out of my girlfriend's house when her parents found some of his artwork in the girl's car . . . and I owe him for that, too. Still, all in all, Richard is a rare bean and a pleasant person to know, and it was an enjoyable task to interview him for *Infinity*.

He grew up in Sunflower, Kansas, a small town even by Kansan standards. He attended high school in Kansas City and received a Bachelor of Arts degree from the Kansas City Art Institute, going soon after graduation into a job with Calvin Workshop, one of Kansas' better-known advertising agencies. After more than seven years in the animation department at Calvin, he dropped out of the workaday world and devoted himself full time to illustrating comic strips for the underground.

Richard has won both a Comic Art and Shazam award and has received numerous other awards and certificates for his comic strip work and his movie animation. His animated film "NeverWhere" has been a hit at every comic convention lucky enough to show it, winning awards in both America and Japan. His comic strip *Rowlf*, pirated and printed in French, won him a medal as "Best Non-European Artist" even though it was an unauthorized edition. His most prized award, however, is a certificate of appreciation from his co-workers at Calvin Workshop, personally signed by each one.

He and his wife Dona and daughter Beth live in Kansas City, though Dona talks wistfully of moving to a more equable climate. The basement is Richard's and it's filled with movie equipment, drawing materials, an air compressor that Richard can't use when Beth is sleeping, barbells, a punching bag, a copy camera and supplies, posters, books, and a stereo with mammoth "Voice of the Theater" speakers.

The following interview was conducted in the middle of April, 1973, in the basement amid thunder and rain. Richard spoke quietly and smiled and laughed a lot, not seeming at all like the ghoulish, evil-minded fiend his work conjures up in the mind. He gave his views with polite conviction, almost hesitantly, and nearly always gave the impression that he was telling only part of what he thought and believed. Richard is slow to criticize and fast to express an appreciation for someone else's work, and was worried throughout the interview that he would sound like a "know-it-all". Any such appearance in the following paragraphs must be attributed to the impersonality of the printed page, for the trait is certainly not present in the individual.

Jan Strnad: *What exactly did you do at Calvin Workshop, and why did you quit?*
Richard Corben: Technically I was in the animation department but that meant you could be doing various kinds of art—titles, graphs, charts, maps, and so on. It was industrial-type animation rather than cartoon-type. At the time I was doing a lot of underground comix and it looked like I'd be doing more and more; also, some people I know were laid off and I felt it was unfair. So I quit in protest. It just happened to be convenient that I had something else to rely on at the time.

JS: *What were some of Calvin's ads that we might see on television?*
RC: Mostly it was local stuff like Macy's Santa Claus. Very cute. There wasn't much character animation. I kept staying on because I believed they'd do a feature-length character animation type film, but they don't want to do it. In fact, their animation department only stays open because it represents a service to clients who want complete service. It's barely in the black most of the time, usually just breaking even. Calvin makes most of their money on the printing process and they'd close the animation department on a whim without thinking about it. I didn't like working in a department that was like a poor cousin to the money-making part.

JS: *I know you'd worked with some of the people there on private projects like "NeverWhere" — was it these people who got laid off?*
RC: No, it was just people I knew at the time.

JS: *How has it been working out?*
RC: It's been up and down. We've had some pretty thin times, but we're still alive. I wouldn't go back to that kind of regular job, and I can't see working for any of the establishment publishers.

JS: *How come?*
RC: Well, the regular comics are like big business. They're not liable to change their product to make a better product — they mainly want something that sells, something as profit-making as possible. They're not going to go to any extra expense just to make the product better as long as it sells well enough as is. They won't go to better printing processes or better paper, they won't go to less advertising or letting their artists have more freedom in what they write and draw.

JS: *Who did you talk to from the four-color comics?*
RC: Joe Kubert, Stan Lee, Roy Thomas. I guess the most recent would be Marv Wolfman. I got a phone call from Stan Lee and letters from Joe Kubert and Roy Thomas. I don't believe half of what they say; they're always putting you on, building you up, saying how great you are — I just let all that pass.

They're so set in the way they do things that, if I worked for them, I wouldn't enjoy doing comics anymore; it would be just like working for Calvin again. If I have to have a steady job I'd have one where I'd make a lot of money and then I'd do what I really love to do as a hobby.

JS: *Your exchange with Joe Kubert—didn't that get a little heated?*
RC: Well, what made it heated was that I had corresponded with Alex Toth and he had recommended me to Joe Kubert, his boss; so Kubert paved the way for me as a favor to Alex Toth, and he really felt put upon after I refused him. That's just conjecture, but it might be the case.

JS: *Is Toth a big fan of yours?*
RC: It's mutual, I guess. It's strange that a lot of people can't stand his work. He doesn't take a lot of time in finishing the work — what's great about it is the design and structural qualities and the way he lays out pages. The way he draws figures is realistic but it's not superhero style, so he doesn't get a great following.

His indivdual panels have a nice linear quality to them but this is a strike against him as far as some fans are concerned; he takes no pains in modeling — it's just an outline drawing, a cartoon. He's concerned with the story as a whole instead of just individual panels.

JS: *Have you thought of doing any commercial work, like Greg Irons is doing for* Grunt *records? Any nicely printed promotional books or any album covers?*
RC: I might do album covers if I ever get together with the people who produce these things. I wouldn't make a big deal out of it, like doing a whole bunch of them. Comix are my thing; comix and motion pictures. Anything else would just be a break.

JS: *Whatever happened to your paperback book cover? What was that for?*
RC: The name of the story was *The Green Men of Rapaz*. It was originally published by Arkham House but is out of print now. It's a Burroughs-type adventure thing. The company that wanted to reprint it was called Sebastian Graphics or something like that.

First they wanted to buy my color poster. I wrote back and said it was published as a poster and copyrighted by me, and they said I could do a cover. They sent me a copy of the story, I read it and made some sketches, and they picked one for the cover. At this

The Green Men of Rapaz.

time we had some discussions about the original and I finally agreed to let them keep it because I needed the money. Then I did the painting, sent it to them, and got no reaction. I finally wrote to them and they said, "Oh, we wrote to you; we liked your painting but had to shelve the project and we'll let you know later." That was at least two years ago.

JS: *Would you think of getting a job totally removed from doing artwork?*
RC: Possibly. I have the copy camera now and *Warren* wants me to shoot some of his color separations. I could probably be working indirectly for the undergrounds by doing their camera work.

Right now I plan to do more work for *Warren* until I get out of debt; I'll mainly do color strips for the inserts in *Creepy* and *Eerie*

JS: *I can't see your style as being acceptable to the establishment, even aside from the busty women and the violence. It seems too grotesque, not slick enough.*
RC: The way different people describe my style is so different. Mike Barrier once said I have a crude but strong style. I don't necessarily agree with all the criticism but I accept it as personal opinion. As far as my own style being in the comics, I think the editors thought I have some kind of underlying skill that they might be able to mold into what they really want, rather than what it is right now or what I want to do.

JS: *SidOpey in the first issue of UP FROM THE DEEP implies a very strong anti-drug message. Is that written in there or am I reading something into it?*
RC: I guess it's there. I don't think it's really that strong.

JS: *So what's your feeling on the use of drugs, especially as a catalyst for the creative process?*
RC: It's no catalyst. The best creative concepts are in your head — the drugs don't do anything. When Jaxon was here he asked me if I smoke marijuana or use any kind of drugs and I said no, and he was shocked. He felt sure from looking at the stuff I do that I was getting some inspiration from drugs, but I don't think there is any inspiration in them. If you analyze what you like about art or any creative processes, it stems from logic. You know for me it comes from logical reasons, not some kind of emotional surges. Perspiration more than inspiration.

JS: *Are you against the use of marijuana?*
RC: No, I'm not for or against. I say let everybody do his own thing.

JS: *The main thing you brought to fandom as far as technique is concerned has been the airbrush. Up until recently it's been pretty well scorned by fine artists but seems to be enjoying a comeback. Is your use of it in the comics an original technique?*
RC: No, the airbrush has been used before but in a way that you wouldn't recognize. Mainly in color separations for covers. Sometimes the airbrush can do many things that make it hard to recognize. You can lay down a flat tone with it and you wouldn't recognize it as airbrush tone — it'd look like a flat paint. Dave Sheridan has an airbrush, but he uses it for covers rather than interior artwork

JS: *You've been ripped off a lot. WARREN changed your artwork, SEBASTIAN GRAPHICS stole your painting, you've had some trouble with fandom, the undergrounds are proving unreliable in their payments. . . .*
RC: Yeah, I guess it's a matter of coincidence. Not that it's bad intent — they're just poor or small.

JS: *What's your favorite underground company to work for? And who are you most mad at?*
RC: Well, they all have their problems. I don't think I have a favorite. I guess I'm most mad at *Rip-Off*; I don't like the way they do a slipshod job of printing and then go out selling it even though it gives a bad impression of not only the printing but of the artist too. This applies to the underground in general, but especially *Rip-Off*. If they ever read this article they're going to be mad at me.

JS: *How much karate do you really know? Your strips are full of it.*
RC: Not much. I guess it started with Bruce Lee playing Kato in *The Green Hornet*, and then I started studying it. I have some books, but the only lessons I remember are the ones I took in the Army.

JS: *So you'd say that the Army has played a critical part in your storytelling style?*
RC: Any influence the Army has would be my anti-reaction to it.

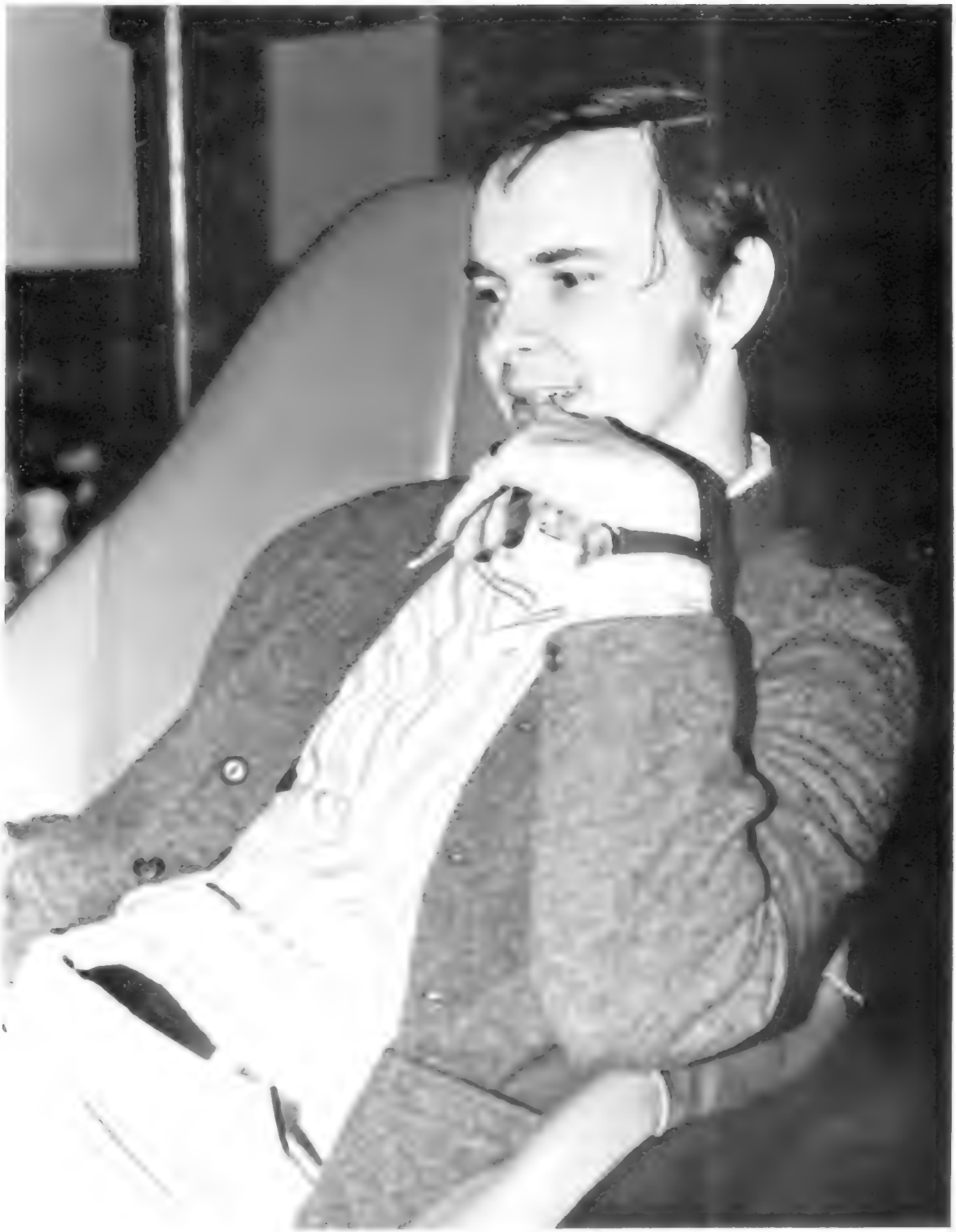
JS: *How old is Beth?*
RC: About two years old.

JS: *When she gets old enough to read comics will you let her read the ones you draw?*
RC: Sure!

JS: *You don't consider yourself a pornographer then.*
RC: That depends on how you define pornography. Is pornography bad, or if it's bad am I a pornographer? I like to have a certain amount of erotic content in a strip, and some of the readers do too.

JS: *Do you think there shouldn't be an age restriction on the comix?*
RC: What's good for some kids isn't good for others. It depends on how their family life really is. I think a well-rounded child wouldn't be affected by the worst pornography. It's just pictures and words. I don't think it can hurt unless there is something twisted about the person already.

JS: *What do you think of the people who are generally considered to be buyers of underground comix? Mainly the college age, in the*



drug or freak subculture?
RC: I like to accept or reject people as individuals rather than as members of a group. I accept you. But you know, like Stan . . . he's older and more into the new subculture, but I know him as a person and I like him.

JS: *Do you classify yourself as a straight?*
RC: I don't know. I'm afraid I wouldn't be accepted by the straights or the freaks.

JS: *You and I have worked together in* Fantagor *and* Anomaly, *Doug Moench has a script in* Grim Wit #2, *and you've adapted Harlan Ellison's "A Boy and His Dog".*
RC: Oh yeah, right. There's been some delay. It's been brewing ever since last summer, I guess. Then finally in December or January Harlan Ellison called me, I agreed it would be a good story and we should try to do it, and so we went ahead. He sent me a new beginning which he wanted in the comic version and I did the adaptation and did the pencils in the month of February. That was a tight schedule. Harlan wanted to look at character sketches and pencils if possible, so I sent those the second week in February and so far he hasn't gotten to going over it. It'll be a high-quality version on good paper like the fanzine edition of *Fantagor 1* was. It'll be 8½ by 11 inches, 34 pages long plus covers which makes it an odd signature. I wasn't going to bring out the fact that it's going to be reprinted as an underground comic but he's already announced it so it won't hurt. It'll be reprinted after the collectors edition is sold out. The underground comic will be four pages shorter and will be in color, so even the collectors will have to get both of them. The underground will be more like the short story.

JS: *I've heard you're going to work with Philip Jose Farmer.*
RC: That's another project that's off in the distance. In fact, I won't be able to work on that until after *Fantagor 5*. I'm doing an adaptation of his *A Feast Unknown*. It'll be two comic books — there will be one story spread out over the length of two comic books and it will be in full color

JS: *Is the commission the same for working in color?*
RC: The way I work it, the publisher pays me a flat rate for doing colors. There are no royalties on the color, just royalties on the book. At *Rip-Off* I have a different deal. They said that for a 75¢ book the price in the beginning is half again as much, so the royalties would be half again as much, which makes it 9¢ a book. But you have to sell out of a first edition to make it worthwhile

JS: *When you started out you wrote all your own stories. Why are you relying on outside writers now?*
RC: There are lots of writers that I enjoy. I guess I didn't rely on them before because they weren't available to me — nobody had heard of me.

JS: *How come you don't work with Harvey Sea anymore?*
RC: Well, he doesn't write too well sometimes and he has a problem with spelling.

JS: *Would you rather work on a comic strip from a synopsis or from a fully written script like "A Boy and his Dog"?*
RC: I like variety.

JS: *Fandom thinks of your work as being very cinematic, often reminiscent of* 2001: A Space Odyssey, *relying more on pictures than on words. But certain stories you've done, like "For The Love of a Daemon" where you had Herb Arnold rewrite the dialogue shows to me that you're very concerned with words as well.*
RC: The way I wanted "For The Love of a Daemon" was like the strip in *Fantagor 2*, "Dukmous, The Man With the Head of an Ape" which was written in a real flowery, indirect way. I wanted it sort of tongue in cheek humor, and Herb is more literary than I am. I wrote the thing first then he went over it and wrote the dialogue.

JS: *You seem to have an appreciation of words. In "Necromancer" in* Grim Wit 1, *the whole story hinged on a syntactical mistake on the part of the sorcerer. And I really enjoyed in "The Beast of Wolfton" when Ellen is calling her husband things like "disgusting leprous debased worm".*
RC: I had a list of words that Tom Vietch sent me. He had read H. P. Lovecraft's novels and had made a list headed "The Words of H. P. Lovecraft". I went through and found various picturesque words and used them.

JS: *What's your opinion of text versus pictures in comic strips?*
RC: It should go from versions of all text to versions of all pictures and everything in between. I think the comics medium is flexible enough so you can do a lot of different things with it. And one isn't measurably better than the other

JS: *I'm glad to hear you say that. "The Beast of Wolfton" looks like a lot of planning went into it. Did you do any background on it?*
RC: The story is one that I wrote way back in art school. I handed it in as an extra project to my creative writing teacher and he started making spelling and grammatical corrections and about halfway through he gave up and handed the thing back.

JS: *People are going to write a history of the underground comix and they're going to have a Richard Corben section, what do you want them to say about you?*
RC: I don't know. I don't really worry about what historians will have to say. Just live your own life.

JS: *Can you think of any particular contributions you have made to the comic book field?*
RC: The contributions I'm making I don't think they want. Some

Gurgy Tate

people have said that I'm bringing a technical kind of quality to the comix, a slickness and a technical self-assurance, but they don't care about that. It's not a real influence, and it's not one I'm consciously pushing, but it's coming anyway. Other artists feel influenced by me; they might like some of my artwork but they'll pick on something they can do like drawing a line this way or using a special technique, so they'll try to imitate it. What I really want to do is just to write a bunch of stories and have them produced well enough that a reader can become totally involved in them rather than being distracted by poor printing or certain art techniques

JS: *The fact that you were a professional artist before you did undergrounds means you have quite a skill developed that most underground artists don't have. The artists who go to the underground are usually self-taught, a lot of them very rough around the edges. I think some of the artists feel a little threatened by this.*
RC: If they look at the sales they'll see that the slick ones don't sell any better than the crude ones

JS: *When you begin to work on a strip for someone else, what determines how much effort you put into it? I see a great difference in let's say, "To Meet The Faces You Meet" in* Fever Dreams *and "Gastric Fortitude" in* Death Rattle
RC: There are many factors. Sometimes time has something to do with it. Sometimes I want to try something new, a different idea. "Gastric Fortitude" failed, I guess, because nobody liked it.

JS: *What if you knew you were getting paid twice as much as usual for a story. Would you put more into it?*
RC: I'd feel there's more pressure. *Warren* does pay me more than the undergrounds to start with, but he doesn't mind sending stuff back to be redone, either.

JS: *Or changing it without asking.*
RC: Yeah, if he thinks his production managers can do it. Whether I know about it or not doesn't matter

JS: *How much better than undergrounds does* Warren *pay?*
RC: I think he pays different artists different amounts. The last strip I did for him was twice as much as the underground pays, but his is a flat rate. Conceivably the undergrounds have a remote possibility of paying more if the books sell enough.

JS: *What's the longest-running book you've had in the underground?*
RC: I have a story in *Skull* 2, but there have been better selling books than that. In fact, *Slow Death* sells better than *Skull* 1 and 3

JS: *Why haven't you done much work lately for fandom?*
RC: Mainly I'm trying for financial success. I really don't have the time; otherwise I'd probably do more. In fact whenever I get into my fights with the publishers I feel, well, I'm not going to do any more comix, just a fanzine once in awhile when I can afford it But then I'd have to have an outside job

JS: *Do you buy any comics?*
RC: No, Herb brings them over when he comes once in awhile. I don't collect any comics now. I only get what the underground publishers send me or the ones that Herb brings over.

JS: *Do you ever leave this basement?*
RC: Sometimes, to go upstairs, to get my meals. The bathroom's upstairs

JS: *What do you think of* Warren's *artists?*
RC: There's one of them that's really good and everybody's trying to be like him — Esteban Maroto. Even the American artists are trying to be like him — scratching the drawings to get marks all over it and doing full page montages as opposed to sequences of panels.

JS: *What kind of stories do you like to do best?*
RC: Very strange. Most of my stories take place in unusual settings. H. P. Lovecraft's stories have mundane settings but ultimately the main idea is very bizarre.

JS: *How about your sculpture? We all know you make little clay models of things — what do you make models of?*
RC: Mainly characters. I used to make characters, armatures, clay models, castings, and foam rubber figures to be animated. I really don't do much of that lately, but that's the way it started. I made the statue of Gurgy Tate mainly for fun, but there was something in the back of my head about going into big production on them and selling them at head shops. But it takes so long to make one casting that it'd have to sell for ten or fifteen dollars.

JS: *How much does the Jones piece sell for?*
RC: I don't know — $25 wasn't it?

JS: *It was more than I could afford, which means over two dollars. Gurgy would be a good convention item. You could make up a dozen or so.*
RC: I've made up three so far. I gave one to Herb and one to Stan and that's the other one. Theirs are painted in colors.

JS: *Is it the sort of thing where, once you do the creative work, you could assign the casting to somebody else?*
RC: If I could find someone who would enjoy it enough to do it. It'd take a knowledge of casting techniques. Stan could do it. Herb couldn't because he's allergic to almost everything

JS: *"NeverWhere" is a very popular item. You've stopped sending it to conventions haven't you?*
RC: Yeah. Everybody's seen it already

JS: *If a person wanted a print of "NeverWhere", what would he have to do?*

Thanks to Gordon Love for reprints from his fine adzine RBCC-Sample copy $1 to 9875 S.W. 212 ST. Miami, Fla. 33157. We recommend it.

RC: He'd have to buy it from Calvin. They still have all the printing material. It's $100, 16mm, color, sound.

JS: *The guy who played Den in the movie — that was your boss wasn't it?*
RC: Yeah, that was played by Ed Faust. He's also written a couple scripts for me. In fact, that one called "Flys", that was his misspelling. There's another one he did that will appear in *Slow Death 5*. The title of that one is "Milton's Big Game". I'd better say it now because I forgot to put his name on it.

JS: *Like you did to somebody else's!*
RC: Yeah, there's some other guy complaining because I didn't put his name on the strip. We could be like the gothic craftsmen — the work is important, not the artist

JS: *Are you basically a shy person?*
RC: Very introverted. I'd never make a speech. That's why I didn't go to the Berkeley Con. I had to make a workshop speech once. I wouldn't serve on a panel, either. I'd like to have a discussion among friends but not in front of six or seven hundred people

JS: *Who did you vote for in the presidential election?*
RC: Well, I voted for Nixon. It wasn't that I was really for Nixon, I just didn't believe McGovern

JS: *You'll be sorry.*
RC: I am!

JS: *What are your political leanings: liberal or conservative?*
RC: I'd say liberal on some things, conservative on others. Sort of a militant middle of the roader.

JS: *What do you think of the space program?*
RC: Well, it's not going as strong as it was. I'd say if you're going to spend money, I'd rather spend it on the space program than on killing people.

JS: *Do you think going to the moon is a worthwhile thing to do?*
RC: It's sort of like, was it worthwhile for Columbus to discover America? He couldn't possibly see if everything was going to happen, but it was certainly worthwhile as far as all of civilization is concerned. We can't possibly see if things are going to work out at this point in time. Maybe there'll be people living up there in space, and maybe there won't be. Maybe they'll all say it wasn't worth the trouble.

Richard and daughter Beth.
Beth can talk
while Richard drinks water.

JS: *I see your poster of Mr. Spock there on the wall. Are you a trekkie?*
RC: I liked *Star Trek* the first season. I didn't like it as much the second. And now it's going to be a cartoon series. What's Bob Kline doing these days?

JS: *Oh well, Bob . . . I have to interview him later. Are you interested in doing animated features like* Star Trek?
RC: Not unless I could have some kind of controlling voice in them. Everybody wants to be Chuck Jones, but nobody wants to do the inking and painting

JS: *How do you see the state of affairs concerning animated films Can anybody beat the old Disney's?*
RC: Not even the *new* Disney's. It's just not as animated as it used to be. Not only is the animation not as good but they don't even think about how they should be — you know, the best way in which the characters should work. Characters who are animated now look more like robots than living characters

JS: *Do you ever watch Saturday morning television?*
RC: Unfortunately my daughter watches it now and so it's on so I see some of it.

JS: TV Guide *has said that Saturday morning tv is witless, poorly animated, stereotype, clichéd, and so on.*
RC: That's what Bill Griffith says about my comic books.

JS: *What do you think of Kenneth Smith's work?*
RC: In some ways it reminds me of Herb's: not the funny animal stuff so much, but the work he did for the fanzines like *Anomaly* It seemed like it was so concerned with detail, such minute detail that it's hard to see as a whole thing. It's very nice looking. And I especially like his *Phantasmagoria*. He'll never make money on that — he'll go broke

JS: *You know from experience with* Fantagor
RC: Yeah.

JS: *Have you thought about doing your own underground printing so you could control the quality and so on?*
RC: It seems like it's a bunch of extra work, and even then you're still depending on almost the same people. If you don't trust the people who are publishing now, then you might not trust them when they're doing your distribution for you and telling you the truth on how many books you've sold. It would be nice publishing if you had good distribution and you had some people who enjoyed doing it too instead of doing all the work yourself

JS: *You'd spend more time worrying about production matters and not getting very much drawing done. That could be a problem.*
RC: Sure. There's not much else I could do at this point. It all takes money.

JS: *Who's your personal favorite among underground artists?*
RC: I think it'd be Fred Schrier. There's a kind of cuteness about his work. It kind of reminds me of Kenneth Smith in some ways When he draws cartoon characters he renders them to the nth degree. Some of the effects he renders are very interesting, like reflections and atmospheric effects. He's a graphic artist as opposed to a total cartoonist

JS: *Who do you like to read?*
RC: I liked *Lord of the Rings*

JS: *I've never seen any LotR illustrations by you*
RC: I don't think I'd fit! I have done some things, though. We'd do sketches at coffee break at Calvin. Dave Holman would draw his versions and I'd draw mine. Like the subject of the day might be orcs or trolls, and of course, hobbits

One of my favorite authors, and one I hate, is Robert Heinlein. I like some of his books a whole lot, and some of the others I hate. I like his *Glory Road* and *Stranger in a Strange Land*, but I hate his *Starship Troopers*.

JS: *He writes on a couple different levels, some of his books being admittedly juvenile. He says they're for that age bracket. Also he's a little bit gung-ho on the military.*
RC: I think he's pushing it too much. Dave introduced me to a couple of his stories.

JS: *What do you do in your spare time?*
RC: Sleep! I'm so involved with everything, I don't have time for anything else. When I'm not working on a strip in the evening, while I'm watching the news I'm writing up stuff in my notebook or maybe a story synopsis or a new technique of photographing color separations or a way to shoot an animated movie. I just can't get it out of my head.

JS: *You don't find time to see* A Clockwork Orange?
RC: No, everything's got to be organized before we go out. We have to get a babysitter — it's got to be the right babysitter — and we have to have the money and there has to be a show we want to see.

JS: *What kind of music do you like? I see a Monkees tape there — are you a Monkees fan?*
RC: That's not mine! I like off-beat groups. I like the Moody Blues. I like classical music, ethnic type music like Tahitian drums or African folk songs, electronic . . . various things.

JS: *The music in "NeverWhere" was what?*
RC: Electronic piano. At least that's what the guy told me.

JS: *Did you ever do ventriloquism . . . card tricks . . .?*
RC: I just get out of a straight jacket.

JS: *Did you see* Fritz the Cat?
RC: Yes, I did. I didn't like it too well. Fritz dosen't seem as warm and friendly as in the comic book, or as sympathetic. He seems like a . . . thing. Very shallow.

JS: *What did you think of the animation?*
RC: Well it sure wasn't Disney.

JS: *Do you think there's a future in adult animated movies?*
RC: I'd say there's as much future in adult animated movies as there is in any kind of animated movie, 'cause that isn't very much. The production costs keep going up and up. One firm is interested in making a full-length animated film of *Rowlf* using the comic book art as a basis for the move. I'm not sure they know how much work they're getting into, but I've told them to go ahead and shoot a 30-second test section and then I'd tell them whether I approve or not. Also, Bruce Jones called a few times asking if I'd be interested in doing an animated movie. He said he had people who were going to give him money for it. I haven't heard anything more about it for awhile.

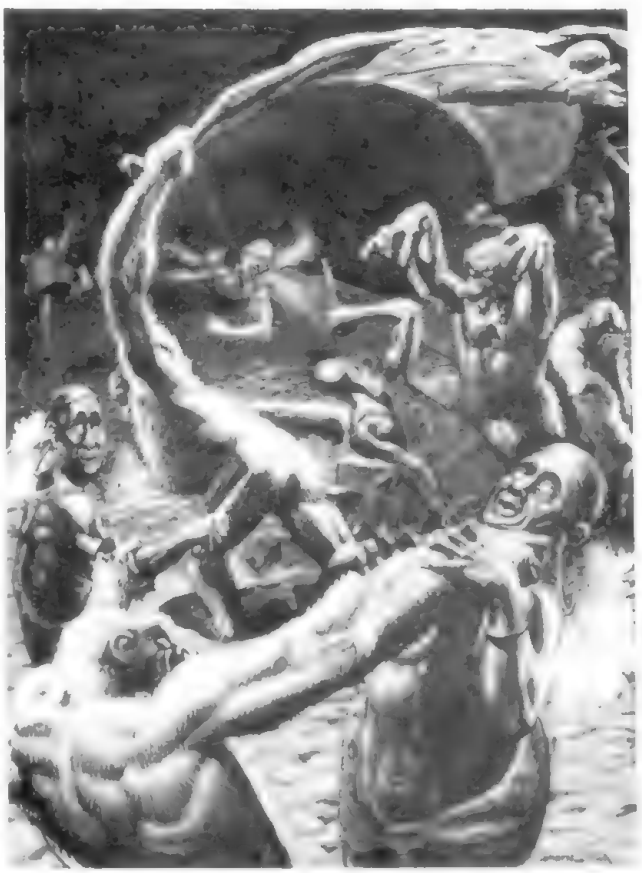
JS: *Do you think you're going to be doing underground comix the rest of your life?*
RC: I don't know if they're really going to last. What I think is going to happen is some of the publishing companies of underground comix will cease to be underground — they'll be as common as regular comics. That means they won't be like they are now. If I have any influence at all I'll push them toward books like these French ones by Druillet. In fact, if I had money I'd publish books like these and nothing else.

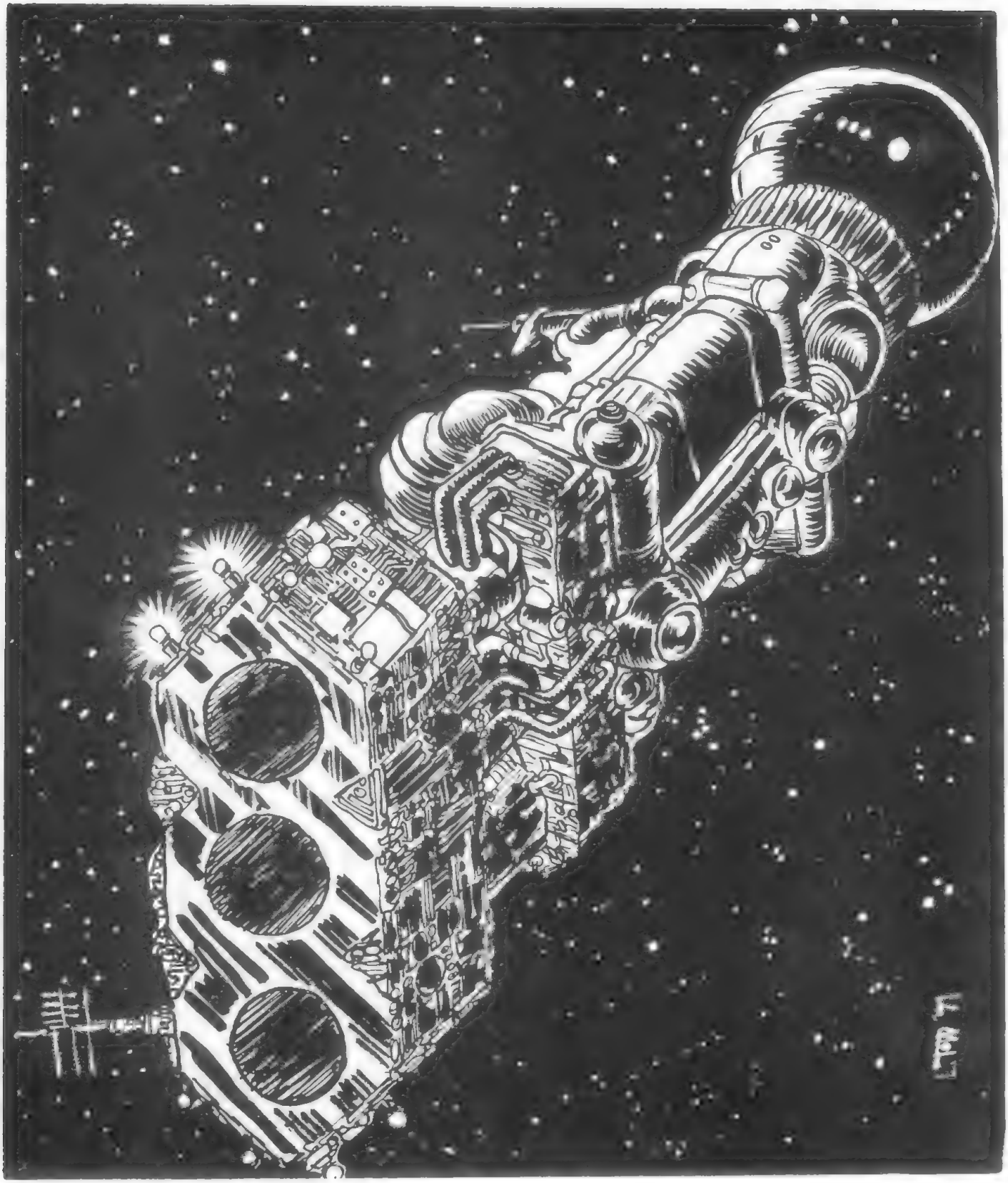
JS: *Some people think the underground comix are becoming as slick as the establishment ones, and pretty soon there'll be a revolution against the undergrounds just as there was against the establishment comics.*
RC: That's already happening! Somebody mentioned to me that

the underground revolted against the social system, but now they've reached a level of slickness and become a part of the system. There's a new underground comix company coming out, not from San Francisco but from Canada, and the comix are crude again. One of the artist's work has a certain degree of fantasy to it. It looks like a strong Wally Wood influence. Swipes!

JS: *What do you think of that?*
RC: Everybody can do his own thing. Swipe if they must. I don't want to get involved, but there are reasons they do it. For me, it would take longer to do a swipe than to draw something fresh. It gives you an idea that their concern is with a slick surface representation as opposed to an illusion of a form.

JS: *Did you do a lot of drawing from live models when you were in art school?*




F.E.L.

RC: Oh yeah. I think the greatest value an art school has is life drawing. We even had life drawing when I worked at Calvin. I went about once a month for a year or so. People who were in the animation department would go together and chip in on the model's fee.

JS: *Do you think that's the best way to get background for doing comic strips, as opposed to what most fan artists do?*
RC: Only if the individual artist considers the human form that important. Maybe his ideas and his characters don't depend on a strip representation. Characters are sometimes better when they're straight from the head.

JS: *What about the aspiring fan artist who starts out copying his favorite comic artist?*
RC: They do it because they want to find out that certain way their favorite artist draws, not that they will ever attain it, at least not in that way. It's when you're a kid, when you're first getting into it, that you feel you want to do it. I did it all the time when I was in grade school; I traced Mickey Mouse, Superman. . . .

JS: *What do you think of superheroes in general?*
RC: No such thing! I can't take them seriously because they're so removed from real experience. It's a kid's fantasy to believe in super powers. I reject it because I feel super powers wouldn't lead to good, they'd lead to corruption. Superheroes are so smart-alecky. I guess part of the fantasy is to be super and show off.

JS: *When you start to work on a comicstrip, where does it begin? Do you have a story in mind, or a character, or what?*
RC: All different ways. I have lots of characters. If I wrote a story for all the characters, I'd have lots of stories. I think the story plot is harder for me. It's not because I can't think of a coherent plot — it's because I can't think of ones I like. Sometimes I see similarities where I probably unconsciously borrowed from another story and I reject it for that, or if I feel it's comletely ridiculous.

JS: *What do you think of Vaughn Bode's work?*
RC: I like it. He's probably had some influence over me as far as going towards violence. He's done some of the most violent stuff I've ever seen, like the "Cobalt 60" series. Did you read the second version, the one that was mostly text?

JS: *Yeah.*
RC: That was awful — really violent.

JS: *Bode says all artists are perverse. Do you feel perverse?*
RC: I'm afraid so. I only think so when I see people who are so different from me. When I watch commercials I keep making comments on them and I drive Dona wild 'cause she can't stand my comments.

JS: *What does she think of your underground work?*
RC: She likes it as well as any other stuff I've done.

JS: *Do you get a thrill when people come up to you at conventions and ask you to sign their comics?*
RC: No.

JS: *Are you embarassed?*
RC: No. I wear a disguise.

JS: *How come you sign your work "Gore" sometimes, "Corben" other times, "Harvey Sea" other times . . . ?*
RC: It's fun, being completely anonymous sometimes.

JS: *Except that your style is so obviously your own that you don't have to sign it.*
RC: I got a letter from one fan who said I was stealing Wally Wood's style. And another fan said I was copying John Severin So far Wally Wood and John Severin haven't made any accusations, though.

JS: *What about your painting? You haven't been doing much lately.*
RC: I've been getting some of my color ideas done with separations, which is a more intellectual thing because you never see the color until it's printed. Well, that's not quite true. I check myself with acetate color keys before I send it in to be printed.

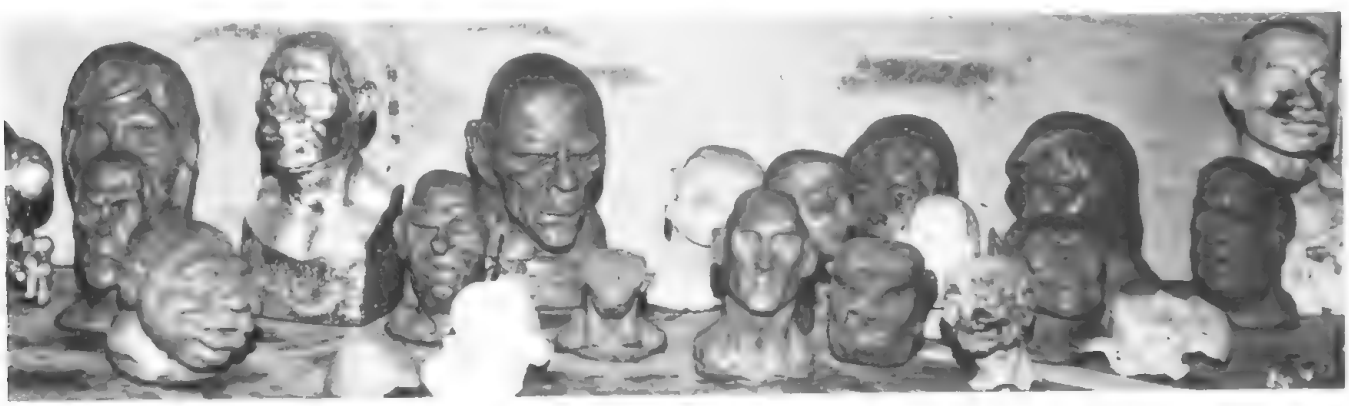
JS: *Why don't you give us some of the dirt on the paintings you did for Mark Feldman?*
RC: Why? Well, okay. He wanted some paintings and I did them for him and he paid me $100 each.

JS: *Did he tell you he was going to re-sell them?*
RC: No, he said he was going to print them in his book. Very interesting — just as I finished the last painting I saw it in the very next issue of *Rocket's Blast*. He had them up for bid.

JS: *Very strange. Are you doing any covers for* Warren?
RC: No, the people who want paintings for covers are very particular and want to see detailed color roughs. Well, I don't like to do detailed color roughs because there's not much left to do on the final painting once the detailed color roughs are done If they can't choose from a black and white rough, then I'd rather not do it. I get the most fulfillment and most into a painting by saving all the good parts to do on the painting rather than having done them already on the rough

JS: *And think it's very odd that you don't keep color photos of the paintings you send off. Whenever I come over all you have is . . . if I'm lucky . . . a black and white Polaroid of the painting you mailed off last week.*
RC: I don't know. It usually works out that by the time I finish a painting the people who are going to use it need it right away, and I don't have film.

Hey, I'm getting tired of this. Let's go upstairs and see if I still have a wife and kid.



Tarzan's Chicago Adventure!

A MODERN TALE OF POLITICAL INTRIGUE AND VIOLENCE By: MIKE OLSHAN (WORDS) and FRANK BRUNNER (ART)

CHICAGO, SEPTEMBER 1968: THE DEMOCRATS ARE IN THE AMPHITHEATER, PREPARING TO NOMINATE THE HUMP; THE YIPPIES ARE IN LINCOLN PARK, PREPARING WEIRDNESS; AND THE PIGS ARE EVERYWHERE...
...COVERING THIS EVENT FOR ESQUIRE, FRENCH ABSURDIST JEAN GENET AND AMERICAN SATIRIST TERRY SOUTHERN... REPORTING FOR THE TIMES OF LONDON, JOHN, LORD GREYSTOKE, BETTER KNOWN TO MANY AS TARZAN!
YOU HAVE LIVED AMONG THE APES, MY FRIEND. ARE THIER WAYS AS PERVERSE AS THOSE OF MEN!?
HARDLY APES LIVE IN BROTHERHOOD, WITHOUT HYPOCRISY, WITHOUT GOVERNMENT, WITHOUT CRIME. THEY VALUE FREEDOM!
LOOK, FELLAS, HERE COMES GINSBERG! HEY, WHAT'S HAPPENIN, ALLEN?
LOOK AT THIS! ISN'T IT BEAUTIFUL?
THEY ARE SO BEAUTIFUL, JUST LIKE ANGELS.
A GATHERING OF APES OFTEN GIVES A FEELING LIKE THIS, WARM AND OPEN, LIKE A HUGE FAMILY, YET WARY OF EVER-PRESENT DANGERS!
ANGELS AND APES, YEAH... LET'S GO OVER TO THE CONVENTION AND SEE WHAT THE PORKERS ARE UP TO!!

AT THE AMPHITHEATER...
BLAH BLAH BLAH BLAH BLAH
APES WOULD NEVER WASTE ENERGY ON THIS NONSENSE. LIFE'S TOO PRECIOUS TO THEM... AND ME TOO!
THEY SHOULD BE CHANTING, NOT RANTING!
THIS IS BULLSHIT! LET'S GET BACK TO THE PARK!
OOOM
THAT SOUNDS LIKE A CHANT I LEARNED FROM THE APES. THEY USE IT TO CALM THE MIND
THAT'S AMAZING! DO APES HAVE ANY RELIGIOUS BELIEFS?
YES, THEY HAVE FAITH THAT EVERYTHING IS ALL RIGHT!
CLORIDGE FOR PENT NOW!!
I PLACE IN NOMINATION THE NAME OF PIGASUS THE PIG!
I SECOND THE MOTION!
I THIRD IT!
I'VE BEEN TOLD THAT THE PIG IS A VERY INTELLIGENT BEAST!
YES, A PIG CAN GIVE AN APE A GOOD RUN FOR HIS MONEY
OOOM
THAT'S RUBBISH! A PIG'S NO MATCH FOR AN APE!

WITH THE NOMINATION OF PISASUS, THE MAN GETS VERY UPTITE, AND HE MOVES IN WITH CLUBS...
YER ALL UNDER ARREST FER CRUELTY TO ANIMALS!
...OOHM?
I SUPPOSE THIS WAS TO BE EXPECTED!
THIS IS UNFAIR! I CAN'T JUST STAND BY AND LET THIS HAPPEN!
WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP? WE'RE OUTNUMBERED!
...CALL FOR REINFORCEMENTS!
IS THAT A MANTRA?
THE BATTLE CRY OF THE GREAT APES!... IT FINDS RESPONSE IN THE NEARBY LINCOLN PARK ZOO!...
DO NOT FEED TH GORILLAS
YES, APES ARE SMARTER AND STRONGER THAN PIGS!
GODDAMN HAIRY FREAKS!!
...AND IN THE BASEMENT OF THE CITY HALL... GIVE A HUNDRED APES TYPEWRITERS AND THEY'LL TURN OUT ALL OF SHAKESPEARE IN A HUNDRED YEARS! IT TAKES CONSIDERABLY LESS TIME FOR THEM TO WRITE DALEY'S SPEECHES!
CAN THE APES TAKE ON THE PIGS? LET'S HOPE SO! THEY STREAM TOWARD THE BATTLE FROM EVERY DIRECTION AS TARZAN DIRECTS THE ACTION FROM ABOVE!
YIP
YIP
YIP
BUT THEY HAVE NO DEFENSE AGAINST TEAR GAS!
AND SO, TARZAN AND HIS LOYAL HELPERS WIND UP IN THE SAME BAG AS THE REST OF US!!
POLICE
CIVILIZATION SUCKS...

INFINITY FICTION:

The Man in the Middle

by Jan Strnad

It has long been my contention that poverty is no excuse for slovenliness. I have always felt that merely because one's fortunes were at an ebb, personal appearance was not a thing to be neglected. Indeed, it is at times such as these that the outside manifestations of well-being should be most carefully attended to, lest the raggedness on the outside fester inwards and infect the inner spirit.

This philosophy used to lead me, at least once per month to the barber shop in the Staats Hotel, about three blocks from my apartment in that old and crumbling section of town where I had lived since the loss of my fame. Precisely how far I had fallen in the eyes of my fellow men, and the details attending my disgrace, are matters which I prefer not to chronichle here. Suffice it to say that I was no longer in ownership of the considerable amount of social and financial status that I once possessed, and that my name was no longer mentioned in gatherings of the cultured elite. The latest appearance of my name in print was in one of those very sad "where are they now?" columns, in a list titled "where-abouts unknown", between the names of two vanished stars of the silent screen.

In spite of the apathy of the rest of the world I still harbored within myself the conviction of my own self-worth. I had fallen from favor, it was true. But favor once lost can be regained, and I was merely waiting for the proper set of circumstance to enable me to once again become the popular, successful man I had been a decade ago. The creative powers within me were not dead. They lay dormant, waiting for the inspirational spark that would fire them into life once more — that was all. Until that time I resolved to do my best to retain my outer composure and hit upon regular hair trimming as an essential aspect of this commitment. So I became a regular patron of the Staats Barber Parlor, greeted each barber by his given name, and was addressed as "sir" in return.

I'm sure that every man who has ever occupied a barber chair has considered the infinity of images projected by the dual mirrors before and behind him. Cubicle after cubicle stretches in front of him, image after image of himself vanishing into eternity. Unfortunately one can never quite see the end since a slight angle is required to see around one's own head, and in hardly any time at all the reflections have passed out of view. I had the foolish idea as a child that if only one's head could somehow be made transparent, then one could see to the end of that vast string of selves and would no doubt see something very startling. Exactly what this startling something would be, I could hardly imagine. Perhaps it would be God, or a blank wall where the images finally came to an end, or something beyond human comprehension altogether. Logic told me the images would reduce themselves to such minute proportions that they would be wholly invisible before they reached infinity; however, I've never been one to rely upon logic to answer my unanswerable questions and even as a man I would find myself almost subconsciously trying to peer around my head to catch a glimpse of God in the barber shop mirrors.

Since my fall I had come to regard my fellow outcasts in the mirrors with a certain feeling of brotherhood and respect. I rather looked forward to seeing them once a month, and on the single occasion when I missed our scheduled appointment I felt such shame that I hardly dared face them when I dragged myself into the shop the next day. But face them I did and immediately came to a realization when I saw them lined up in the mirror looking as sheepish as I.

"Ah ha," I said. "So *you* forgot too!" With that I asked their forgiveness, received it, and forgave them all in return. I — that is, we — never missed again.

I hasten to point out that, at this stage, I regarded my entire relation with myselves as nothing more than a game, an exercise in creative thinking. At no time did I lose sight of the fact that I was real and they were merely reflections of my reality. Were I to die, so would they. And yet I could break the mirrors, smash the illusion, and snuff them out of existence without causing myself the least bit of bodily harm. (At least that's what I thought at the time. From what I can gather now, my smashing of the mirrors would have been analogous to shattering the picture tube of a television set and thus "killing" the players depicted thereon; the players would continue their roles just as if nothing had happened, only I would have denied myself the pleasure of watching.)

At any rate, I never seriously considered breaking the mirrors and only mention the idea here to ward off any aspersions regarding my sanity. I maintained complete control of my senses at all times during every visit and never allowed my little mental game with my images to leave the sanctum of my mind. Until, that is, the day I noticed that one of them was different.

Such a thing is impossible, I know. But nevertheless, Image Number Seven definitely had a certain healthy look that the rest of us lacked. He looked like a man who had spent the weekend in the country or by the sea, whereas the rest of us still sported our familiar sallow complexions, the mark of the indigent city-dweller. I searched my mind for an optical principle, some sort of flaw in the glass or in the silver coating that would explain this apparent anomaly, but could think of nothing. And besides, any flaw of this nature would have made itself known on previous occasions, while this was the first time that Image Number Seven had seemed in any way different from the rest of us. I wondered if the mirror had been damaged since my last visit, and this was when I let my fantasy intrude upon my observable behavior. I asked the barber if some accident hadn't befallen the mirror in the last month.

"No, not that I know of," he said. "Why? Something wrong?"

"Not wrong, exactly," I began. "But . . . doesn't the seventh image of me look a trifle different from the rest?"

He considered the question for a moment and studied the mirror closely. Then he emitted a feeble attempt at a laugh and concluded that I had been "making a joke." From then on I kept all such observations to myself.

There is not much more to tell of that particular day. Image Number Seven never once got out of line or acted differently. He lowered his chin when we did and winced when the barber nicked his ear with the clippers, as did we all, and never acted in any way superior for his healthy glow. But I did notice, as I pulled on my coat, that his suit fit him tighter and was a different cut than mine — a newer style. He was evidently a man of some means, unlike my other selves and I.

"Well," I thought as I paid the barber and cast one last glance at the mirror, "I'm glad that one of us at least has made it."

I gave the incident little thought in the following month, and indeed I began to have my doubts that it ever happened at all. My main efforts were directed toward my work in a redoubling of forces that would set me once again on the path of success. Whether or not Image Number Seven had in fact attained some degree of accomplishment superior to that of his mirrored brothers ceased to be a consideration. However, I'll readily admit that seeing him as I did, in reality or imagination, had fanned my failing ambition into a new heat. For what was Image Number Seven that I was not? What creative powers had he that I did not also have? Thus, if he had been able to overcome adversity and regain his proper station in life, then so could I. And I set out to prove that assertion to myself.

My month's work bore little fruit, so the next month found me still somewhat shabbily dressed and standing in front of the large windows in front of the Staats Barber Parlor. Would the well-to-do Number Seven be there as before? Or would he have moved to a more fashionable neighborhood and be sitting in someone else's

mirror, perhaps receiving a manicure from a pretty young girl who smiles at his jokes?

I closed my eyes as I seated myself in the barber chair and savored the expectation. Slowly I opened them and . . . yes, there he was, just as the time before. His hair was just as long as mine, but neater, and he wore a shirt that I had not seen before. His ruddy glow had deepened and I think he had gained some weight. But something more was amiss, for not only was Image Number Seven different, but so were Numbers Five, Nine, and perhaps another on down the line. They were all enjoying, apparently, a much more comfortable life than my own.

Now I suppose it's human nature to interpret the success of others as failure of one's own, and I'll admit to feeling a certain amount of jealousy over the good fortune of my fellows. But more than that, I think it nothing less than rude for one's mirror doubles to sever the bond of commonality, to say as it were, "Your life isn't good enough for us — we're going to make our own." To have them suddenly breaking away from me, casting me off, was a source of irritation and hurt, causing me a good deal of consternation.

That haircut was a somber one. My final feeling was depression. The anger and hurt were gone, for I realize that I hadn't, perhaps, done my best in providing for us. Had I but known that I was responsible not only for my own life but for that of countless other selves existing behind barber shop mirrors, I certainly would have made a stronger, more concerted effort. And now it was too late. They had taken off on their own — and who can blame them? — and now it was up to me to catch up, to prove my worth as their archetype in the world of reality. I vowed to them as I left the shop that day to do better in the month to come

I failed. The next month showed me more haggard, more weary, but none the richer or more acclaimed. Not even was I within sight of a future success. I had worked night and day, and tortured my brain devising great works and plans and projects and a scheme or two, but ended the month no further along than I had been at the outset. I dreaded the haircut to come but forced myself, almost as an act of punishment, to face my incarnations behind the glass.

I avoided looking at the mirror as I entered the shop and kept my attention rooted firmly to the floor throughout the entire ordeal My shame mixed with my fear and I regret to report that I trembled to such an extent that the barber was forced to hold me still while he snipped around my ears. He finished the rough beginning cuts and proceeded to the delicate trimming and still I had not looked up to check the progress of my images. I stole a peek at my immediate reflection and was relieved to find that he, at least, still shared with me a bond of poverty, for his skin was as grey as my own and his cheeks as hollow

Only when the barbering was done and the barber removed the cloth from around my neck and I stood to pay him his due, only then did I look deeply into the mirror, but I was not prepared for the vision that stretched before me: every image but one, the first one, was well-dressed and seemed the peak of health. Each was ruddy, well fed, and proper. Each, in summary, was the picture of success that I was not, the manifestation of all I wished to be

Ashamed, I exchanged woeful glances with my one remaining unfortunate brother, accepted my change from the barber, and hurried from the shop. I have not been back since

Neither have I been to any such establishment, and very infrequently do I even leave my room. I have also turned my one mirror to face the wall and am careful not to gaze into a sinkful of clear water. Not until I have made a success of myself will I re-enter the world of mirrors, and with good reason. Obviously I am ashamed and frightened. I could not stand to face the suffering image just one step removed from my own, and I could not live with the sight should he have made good without me.

And yet I feel a responsibility to him. If I myself cannot make good, I should at least allow him the freedom to do so on his own This he cannot do if he is always required to be wherever I am whenever I pass a mirror, a shiny metal surface, or a still pool of water. I have resolved to absolutely avoid all situations that could possibly bring me in contact with my reflection; in this way I liberate him.

My hair is growing inordinately long and I fear that I will soon be forced to cut it myself, feeling its length with my fingers and gauging my handiwork in that manner. It hardly seems worth the bother, considering my lack of contact with the outside world, but as I stated earlier it is important to keep up external appearances lest the inner being suffer the consequences. Meanwhile I intend to continue my efforts at self-improvement, to re-establish myself as the master I once was, and perhaps one day we will have a grand reunion, my brothers and I, in the barber parlor at the Staats Hotel

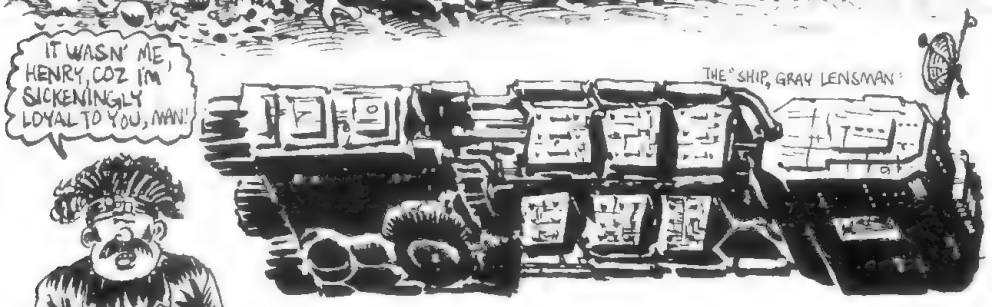
HOLY JUMPIN' JUPITER! FOUR WHOLE ECLECTIC, CONFUSIN'

EYEFUL

NOTEBOOK PAGES BY LARRY S TODD

WITH MARGINAL NOTES TO CONFUSE AN' CONTUSE YOU....

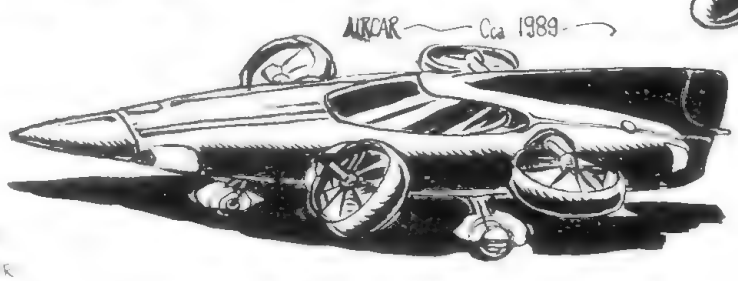
A SPACER IN SUIT UN-FORM FROM THE "SHIP GRAY LENSMAN"



A SPACE MARINE

THESE GUYS ARE MERCENARIES HITCHING RIDES ABOUT SPACE IN THEIR ARMORCLADS

THIS CREEP IS TALKING TO HENRY GALT, CHIEFTAIN OF THE SPACE MARINES THE GUY IS IN MUCHO HOT WATER!!



AN OBSERVATION ON THE COSMIC ROLE OF MONEY

THERE ARE FEW THINGS INDEED THAT EXIST SO FIRMLY ON THE INTERFACE BETWEEN YIN AND YANG AS MONEY. 'TIS THE BORDERLINE THING, ALWAYS CUSHIONING CONFLICT BETWEEN DUALITIES.

HENDRIK THE MILLIONAIRE OF PLANET MOTH PROCYON B III

THE MOTHIC ARE BIG GUYS AT HOME ONLY ON THEIR GIANT TWISTED PLANET. ORIGINALLY EARTH-HUMAN COLONISTS, THEY QUICKLY BECAME A NEW HUMAN SPECIES BECAUSE OF THEIR DEMANDS ADOPTED WORLD. THEIR TIME SENSE IS WARPED TERRIBLY. IF IT WASN'T, THEY COULDN'T LIVE OUTSIDE THE CITIES ON MOTH.

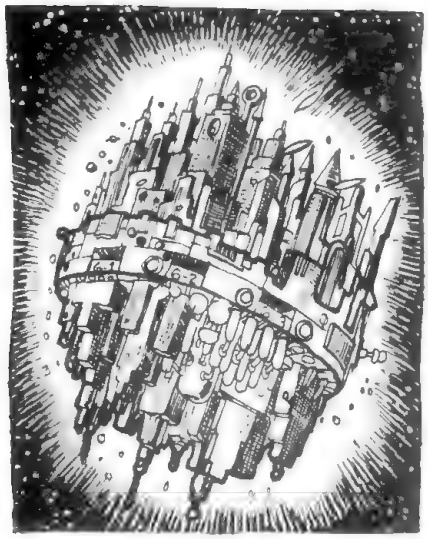
Q: WHERE DID THE BREAD FALL WHEN THE BAKER OPENED THE OVEN?

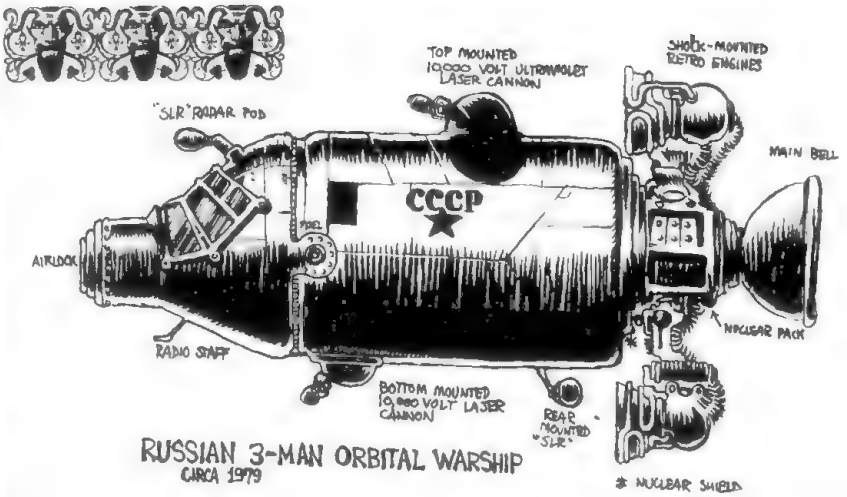
SASHA RUBINOFF

FIRST MATE OF THE "SHIP, GRAY LENSMAN"

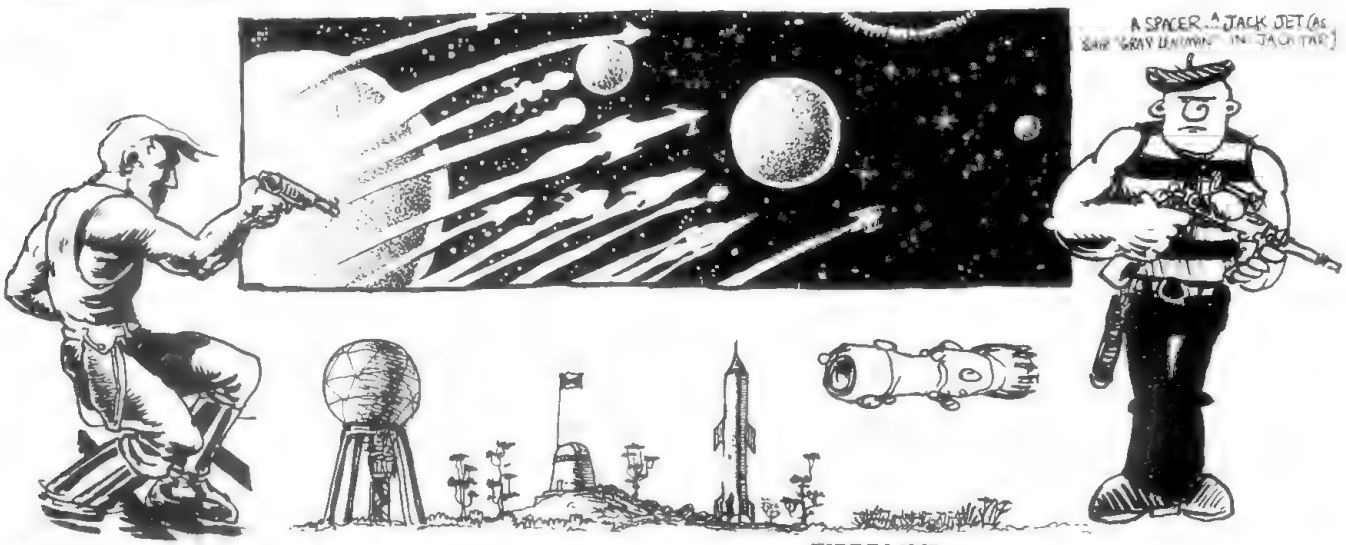
THE SHIPS OFFICERS ARE ALL WOMEN, MOSTLY BECAUSE FEW OF THEM WISH TO WORK ON THE DECK, AND THERE IS LITTLE POWER SUPERIORITY INHERENT IN A SHIPS OFFICE OTHER THAN THAT INVOLVED IN WORKING THE SHIP. THE SHIP IS A COMMUNAL SOCIETY WITH SOME SEX RELATED ROLES IT IS RATHER ACCEPTED THAT IF IT IS A SHIP'S OFFICE BEING VOTED ON, THE CANDIDATE WILL BE FEMALE. THIS PROVED RATHER DISQUIETING TO THE FIRST FEW ALIEN RACES MEN ME (KEZFI, ARRENDI, BUGS) WHO, DUE TO A GREATER DEGREE OF BIOLOGICAL SPECIALISM, FAILED TO COMPREHEND THE POSSIBILITY OF AN INTELLIGENT FEMALE. IT WENT SO MUCH THE WORSE WITH THEM TILL THEY DID.

PREPARE FOR AN ART CAREER





RUSSIAN 3-MAN ORBITAL WARSHIP
CIRCA 1979



No More Razor Blades To Buy!

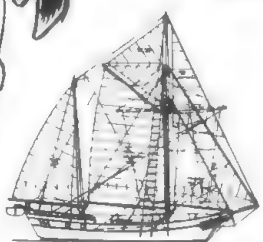
FIBRE LIMB

LOX—Mightier Than Dynamite

THE SPACE ADMIRALS POSE FOR A PORTRAIT AFTER THEIR TRIUMPHANT DEFEAT OF GODLESS ALIEN GEEKS.

A SPACE MARINES PERSONAL ARMORCAN.

Old Bill Says—
LET ME SHOW YOU HOW I DO IT
DR ATOMIC'S EXPERT-IN-A-NIGHT PROGRAM
COUPON
A NOTED AUTHORITY LENDS HIS OPINION!
I Will Train You at Home to fill a Big-Pay Job!
Send coupon for Amazing Special Offer!
SPACEMAN TIMOTHY SWENSON AIRLOCK SUPER "SHIP, GRAY LENSMAN"
VITAL FACTS
GET MY FREE BOOK!
500 tricks
Big Salaries Paid Experts
LEARN TO LEND YOUR OPINION FOR BIG $$$$$!
Learn to Mount Birds
Clip this Coupon and Mail it Now!
Experts are in Big Demand!
WILMA DEERING, DO YOU BELIEVE
I HOPE YOU REALIZE I'M REALLY QUITE CRAZY!
ROOMPA DOOMPA
SKETCH - BACK COVER SKULL 4
SHIT
THUT TAP MO, I'M PREGNANT!
KENZOR FROM "BROKEN SPARROW"
MORE
Small Earthquakes Protect Us
Old Bill says—
Be An ARTIST!
$5, $10, $15 FOR ONE DRAWING
LEARN TO DRAW



ORIGINAL DESIGN FOR KENZOR "BROKEN SPARROW"

A CAT WAS AN EXTREMELY HEAVY LOAF AND IT FELL RIGHT OFF THE PLANET.

I'D RATHER BE SAILING

NO SHIT. ~ Todd 1773 ~

FOR ANYONE INTERESTED, SEND $5.00 IN CHECK OR M.O. TO "DR ATOMIC, BOX 212, BERKELEY, CA 94701 AND GET A DRAWING OF DR ATOMIC DELIVERED TO YOUR DOOR BY AN AGENT OF THE U.S. GOVERNMENT.

A REPORT ON CREATION CONVENTION 1972

November 24th to 27th

By Gary Berman and Adam Malin

Creation II was in many respects similar to our first Creation back in 1971. There was the same general hysteria that occurs at all conventions. However, a most interesting thing took place; for the first time at a major convention science fiction, comics, and fantasy were given a chance to meet collectively and simultaneously. The result was a gathering far superior to our first effort.

We arrived at the Statler Hilton Friday morning, about six A.M. (For those of you who don't wake up early there is a six in the morning!) In the next six and one half hours the many different facets of convention preparation went into play as displays were set up, signs posted, tables rearranged, staff organized and the hotel bill settled. The staff, some thirty persons of considerable experience was led by Security chief Liam O'Connor. Liam, a mild mannered red-haired Kung Fu master from Brooklyn proved himself a worthy brick wall in holding out the crowds that were forming by the time we opened the dealers' room at twelve thirty. With all conditions operative, we were ready for the convention to formally begin. Jeff Glass, third in charge, had disappeared into the tainted vastness of LaGuardia airport to retrieve Philip Jose Farmer, our science fiction guest of honor. The remaining two chairmen were occupied greeting the many guests who were now arriving and watching over the incredibly hectic and overflowing admissions table. Approximately ten minutes before the opening of the dealers room, Adam made his way to the podium of the Sky Top ballroom to announce the day's schedule to the crowd, to welcome all, and to let them into the dealers room. Unfortunately security was not yet ready for the fans to enter the dealers room as some dealers were still arriving and so the crowd had to be held up as they stormed out of the Skytop doors. After another five minutes, the people were let in. They crammed eagerly about the many tables of the dealers room. In all over 125 tables were sold which must be a record for a convention in its second year.

Although we were hopeful that "The Next Hundred Years" panel featuring Philip Jose Farmer, Kelly Freas and Ron Goulart would begin on schedule at 2 P.M. the delay of Farmer's arrival necessitated the scrapping of this panel until later on. At about this time the Creation Art Display was opening up on the eighth floor of the Statler. Under the able hand of Doug Murray this display contained original artwork by many notables in the field. ACBA (the Academy of Comic Book Arts) had also opened their convention sponsored exhibit. Unfortunately, we were disappointed with this show because the art on display wasn't of the quality we had hoped. Vaughn Bode's and Jeff Jones' artwork was featured in another display set up in Vaughn's hotel room — their graphics were sensational. Jim Steranko had arrived by two with a dozen oils for the art exhibit which by now was hosting quite a crowd.

At four P.M. the convention panels finally got started. "The Future of Space Flight" was the title of the first and guests Kelly Freas, Vaughn Bode, and the just arrived Philip Jose Farmer were present on the stage. Together they provided a more speculative, humorous, and optimistic talk than had been expected. Jeff had decided on the topic for discussion and it was a good choice — Kelly has been deeply involved with NASA and Vaughn had relatives in the field. Philip Jose Farmer's former occupation was in this area of science, so it was obvious from the start that all 3 men were qualified to speak on this subject. Indeed this is what we were trying to do throughout the entire convention — not to crowd discussions with top names — but to provide intelligent speakers with a background in the topic.

At six thirty (on schedule!) was the first of our auctions headed by quick talking Al Schuster. Being a no minimum bid auction scores of big little books went at very low prices, and good buys were found on ECs, Mads, artwork, and toys.

Friday night's film event consisted of a stock of classic films including King Kong, and this went off without a hitch. (Manny Maris was in charge of films and did a fine job in arranging a hasty film collection when several movies did not arrive on time for showing.)

Retiring to the convention headquarters room we decided that it would be a disaster if we did not stick to schedule on Saturday and prayed that no additional panels would go sour as did the first two on Friday. The night went fast, broken up by several trips up to the eighteenth floor to check on the con guards who were protecting the infinitely valuable dealer's room. Before long we were semi-awake again in time to prepare for Saturday's events. Tickets went on sale at about nine thirty and a Creation first — we opened on time — ten o'clock. From eleven to one our two

Creation ~ N.Y.C.

Philip Jose Farmer

guests of honor, Kelly Freas and Philip Jose Farmer, delivered their tightly prepared speeches to the audience. We were unhappy that the auditorium wasn't filled, but most of the fans chose to stay in the huckster's room to get the early morning bargains. Kelly, in discussion about his craft and its direction, was quite interesting and received a warm reception from the slowly filling room. Mr. Farmer delivered a clever list of guidelines for the co-existence of science fiction and comic fans. He mentioned the many different types of fandoms he had come to know and related them to the varied audience. The audience responded in recognition of the things he spoke of, and it was the perfect choice for a speech at Creation.

No sooner had the keynote speeches ended then, at one, Isaac Asimov, writer of such SF classics as *Foundation* and *I, Robot* gave a short speech on "Why You Should Read Science Fiction" Mr. Asimov is an incredibly gifted speaker and before long he had the audience in his pocket (although they were probably in there before the speech began). At the conclusion of the question and answer session which followed the speech, Jeff presented Asimov with an award for excellence in science fiction — one certainly deserved.

During the preceding speech the staff was laying the groundwork for the most important and experimental panel of the convention, which came at two o'clock. Vaughn Bode's underground comic concert. This event was to consist of color slides of some of his strips narrated by Vaughn himself. To the artist this was a crucial experiment — it might become college circuit material for him. Come two o'clock the Skytop room was jammed to capacity for the highly publicized event. The various news medias were on hand to witness Vaughn's brilliant performance, two hours of superb material — humorous, satirical, and magnificiently illustrated. At the end of the production Bode received a standing ovation, for his obviously super-successful endeavor.

At the conclusion of this event, we dashed out for our quick Deli City reward of grime steak. Returning to the eighteenth floor (after a rushed check on the art show with different pieces and awed gazers) we arrived for the end of the preset Oil Painting panel featuring masters of the brush, Gray Morrow, Kelly Freas and Jeff Jones. Questions from the audience helped to strengthen this panel but another big show was on its way. We were now in the process of collecting the various plaques that were to be presented at the Awards Ceremony. Jeff Glass was miraculously produced from the dealer's room and the three chairmen went downstairs to close the art show for the day as Doug Murray approached the stage to MC the First Annual Creation Awards Ceremony. At six o'clock Doug proceeded to present the awards — inscribed by witty (or semi-witty) epithets from Adam and Doug. The receivers included Bill Gaines, Barry Smith, Joe Kubert, ACBA (Neal Adams), Kelly Freas, Jeff Jones, Gray Morrow, Al Williamson, Philip Jose Farmer, National Lampoon, & Bernie Bubnis. The most memorable plaque was the last, given to Bill Gaines for being "the son of M.C. Gaines." At the end of this ceremony, Al Schuster materialized again at the top of the Skytop's podium dealing his lot of books, art and comics at our second no-minimum bid auction. Although this auction was marred by several low-interest items, it was the more successful of the two. Perhaps this is because the auditorium was crowded with people now awaiting the films. When the auction drew to a close with the film people growing restless, the lights dimmed at about 9 P.M. and the show began: *Never Where* by Richard Corben, *Dr. No*, excerpts from *2001: A Space Odyssey* and two reels from *Gone From The Wind*. When the lights went back on early the next morning, the fans returned to bed and we were already worrying about Sunday.

Sunday would go as we had predicted, smoother and quieter than the two previous days. The crowd had thinned a bit, and moved slower possibly because they had seen two days of hectic activity.

Due to the inefficient cleaning staff of the Hilton, and the delay of several dealers, the huckster's room was opened late. It didn't put many fans out though; Sunday morning most people sleep late and when the room opened at about eleven A.M. just

Isaac Asimov

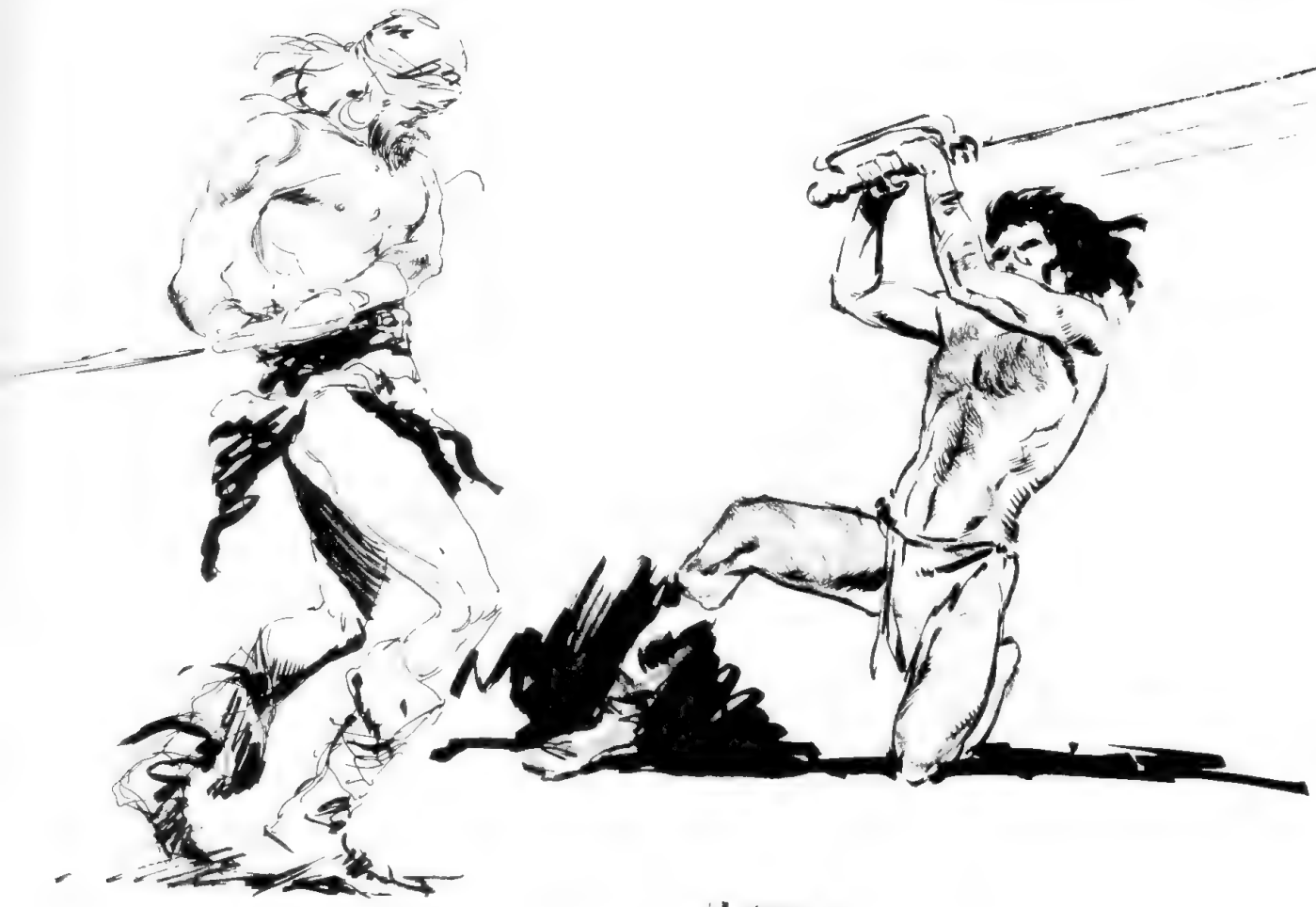
about one hundred fans were present. At 11:45 Adam gathered Al Williamson and Jim Steranko for their panel; he would be narrating. The panel turned out to be quite enjoyable and Al and Jim appeared totally at ease and compatible with each other. With Jim Steranko as the comic historian and Al Williamson as part of that history, they make a formidable team. They answered several intelligent questions from the audience and labored with some of the less intelligent ones. Generally speaking we were told that the convention drew a more sophisticated crowd than others in New York and we tend to agree. Witness the fact of the percentage of well thought out questions asked of panel members instead of the usual crap we are accustomed to. Following the Steranko/Williamson hour, Lin Carter and Philipp Jose Farmer discussed "Where is the Borderline Between Science Fiction and Fantasy?" Audience reaction to this panel was not as enthusiastic as that to others, but it was most interesting. Amusingly, the comic writers panel received a much better response although it consisted of the typically asinine bits and pieces type questioning.

The convention closed at five o'clock and we bid farewell to those who had come to attend our convention. Generally we held a sense of satisfaction (and spentness) far beyond what we had from Creation 1971 and it felt good to realize that we had learned a thing or two in that last year.

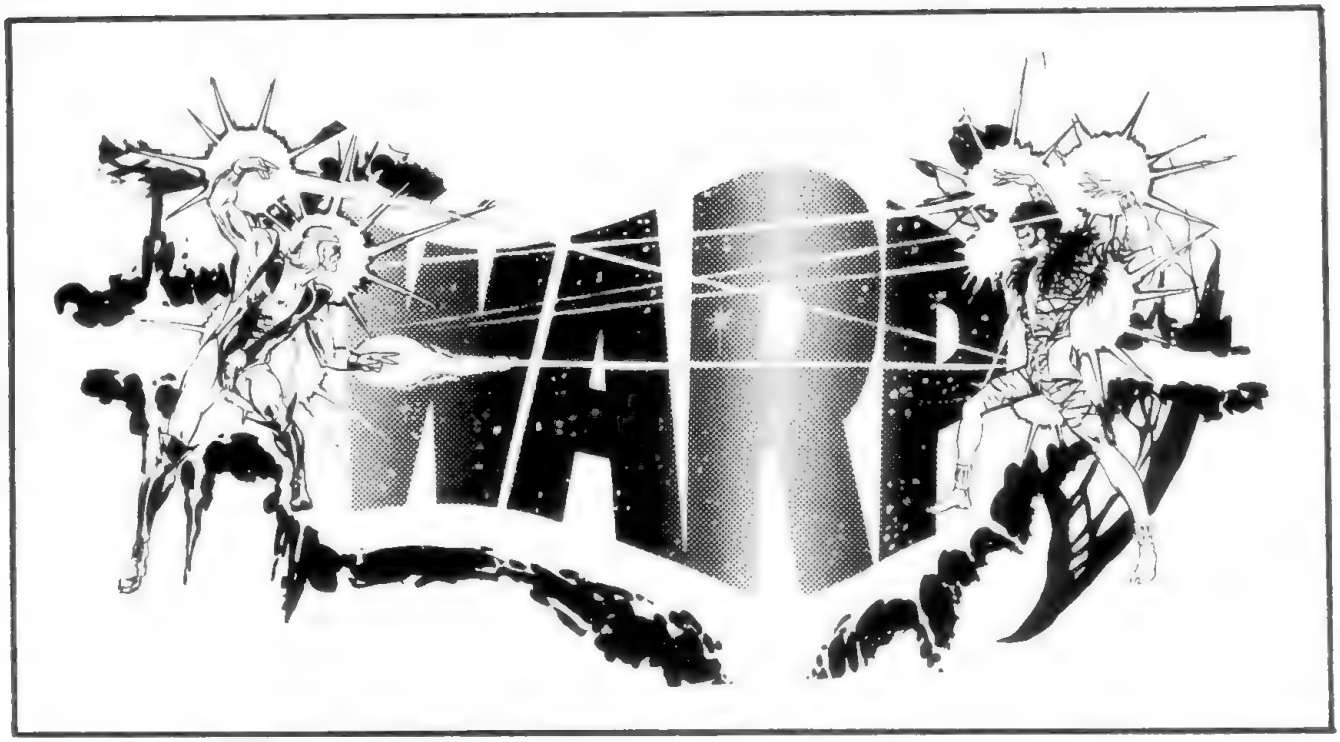
There were a couple of things we will try to correct for next time – Security was a bit too strigent — searching people as was done for about half an hour after a valuable book was stolen from a dealer is ridiculous. People did sneak in without paying which is unfair to those who do pay. All in all, however, we did enjoy ourselves, and we're sure everyone else did.

We are quite proud of the list of guests who attended; below is a complete list. Other statistics — about 2000 people came, about half for all three days.

CREATION GUESTS — I. Nelson Bridwell, Al Williamson, Mark Hannerfeld, Elliot Maggin, Vaughn Bode, Jim Steranko, Wally Wood, Marie Severin, Roy Krenkel, Tony Isabella, Dave Cockrum, Lin Carter, Gray Morrow, Neal Adams, Marv Wolfman, Len Wein, Gil Kane, Howie Chaykin, Steve Skeates, Steve Gerber, Alan Weiss, Steve Englehart, Kelly Freas, Jeff Jones, Philip Jose Farmer, Bill Gaines, Ron Goulart, Mike Kaluta, Frank Brunner, Hans Steffan Santesson, Steve Harper, and Isaac Asimov. We hope we didn't leave someone out, and we thank all those above for the great help and generosity in making Creation a success.



HULP!



THE RISE AND FALL OF WARP

January 31, 1973. WARP makes its Broadway debut, one day late. Before a capacity house, the WARP players mug, prance strut, hurl mind-bolts, and thoroughly exhaust themselves, earning a standing ovation and multiple curtain calls.

February 18. The same players work their way through a rather dispirited and altogether unhappy final performance of WARP.

What happened? Why did WARP die so quickly? For the answers let us go back, back to Chicago better than 2 years earlier.

Two members of the Organic Theater, Stuart Gordon and Lenny Kleinfeld, both fans of sci-fi and the comic book, decide to write a new play, based on these sources, for their troupe. The result is WARP I, "My Battlefield, My Body". Tailored to the talents of their group, improved through improvisation and on-stage evolution, it succeeds.

WARP draws large crowds in Chicago, and rave reviews. And, even as WARP I is playing to packed houses, WARP II is being written. WARP II premieres a month later, and enjoys even greater success than WARP I. Finally, some three months later, WARP III premieres, completing the trilogy, and gaining new acclaim for the young, energetic Organic.

Enter Tony D'Amato. Associate producer of Grease, another Chicago-based production that made the jump to Broadway. D'Amato thinks the time is ripe for WARP and comes to an agreement with the Organic Theatre to co-produce the show on Broadway. One of the conditions of the Organic people, however, is that they bring in some new blood to create new costumes and sets for the New York opening. They want a pro comic-artist for the job, and their first choice is Neal Adams. D'Amato agrees.

Enter Neal Adams. He is approached on the idea of creating costumes and backgrounds for this new, rather unusual play, and flown to Chicago to see a performance. As Neal later explains: "It was too much. Don't ever see all parts of WARP in one sitting as I did. It's mind-blowing, there's just too much going on. Too many new concepts, too much action."

Enchanted by the show, Neal agrees and sets whole-heartedly to work designing new costumes and sets for the play, as well as all of the advertising and promotional art. The result is startling, a blend of the best elements of the Comic book and sci-fi. Although many of the costumes bear a striking resemblance to earlier comic-characters (example; Prince Chaos strongly resembles Kraven the Hunter from Marvel's Spiderman) the result is wholly satisfactory. The new set design is equally striking — consisting of numerous round platforms stacked one atop the other, the stage gives room for the maneuvers and acrobatics so necessary to WARP, yet has an outworldly, eerie quality that helps maintain the illusion of otherness.

Winter 1972; the heads of the Organic Theater (Gordon and Kleinfeld again) come to New York with D'Amato to make final preparations for a theater and the starting of the production. Although Gordon and Kleinfeld want to open off-Broadway, the final decision is for the Ambassador Theatre, a medium-sized (1100 seat) house on-Broadway. D'Amato feels that Broadway, and the New York critics, are ready for something like WARP and is staking all on this feeling.

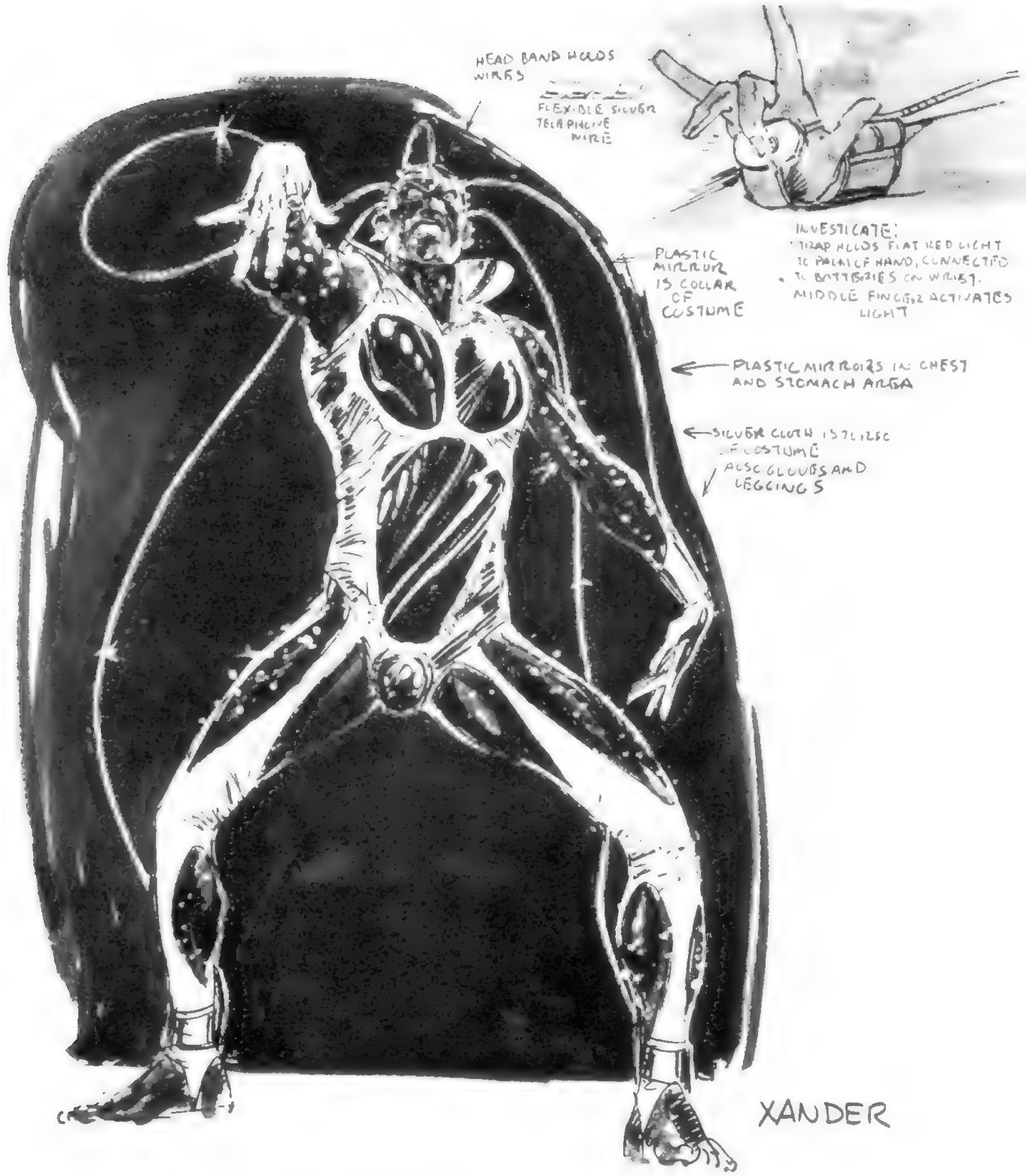
All through the winter and into January the sets and props are built and finally, in mid-January, the cast and equipment move into the Ambassador. Rehearsals have been held on the actual set at the builders, so the only real need is to acclimate to the building in the few days before the first preview.

Polishing goes on until, on the 29th of Jan., just 24 hours before the first scheduled preview, it is discovered that one of the actors is unable to make a costume change quickly enough to get back on stage in the required amount of time. (In WARP, 7 actors portray 18 parts.) The first preview is moved back a day to allow time to iron this out. The costume is redesigned and altered until the changeover can be made smoothly.

Jan. 31; WARP makes its first preview. The audience is composed mostly of sci-fi/comic fans who have heard of the show through the grapevine, that certain number of New Yorkers who *always* go to first previews (for example; Mrs. Miller, a well known figure from the audience of the Tonight Show) and guests of the cast, crew, and associated WARP figures.

The show starts — the plot is rather simple; it concerns a bank clerk, DAVID CARSON, who, in his alter-ego of LORD CUMULUS, DEFENDER OF GOODNESS, has been planted on earth for safe-keeping until he is needed. That time has arrived, and he is transported to the fifth dimension. Bewildered by events (he

STRIPES
FEATHERS . .
. OSTUME ALSO
-ENDS ITSELF TO MIME.
IN THE CLASIC
TRADITION OF
EUROPEAN
MIMISTS
REAR
VIEW
IS MORE
THREATNING
BECAUSE
OF
SHOULDER
MASS
USEFULL
ESPECIALLY
IN
INTRODUCTORY
SCENE
LORD CHAOS
ORNAMENTS SHOULD BE
SILVER


HEAD BAND HOLDS WIRES
FLEXIBLE SILVER TELEPHONE WIRE
PLASTIC MIRROR IS COLLAR OF COSTUME
INVESTIGATE:
STRAP HOLDS FLAT RED LIGHT TO PALM OF HAND, CONNECTED TO BATTERIES ON WRIST.
MIDDLE FINGER ACTIVATES LIGHT
PLASTIC MIRRORS IN CHEST AND STOMACH AREA
SILVER CLOTH IS TO USE OF COSTUME
ALSO GLOVES AND LEGGINGS
XANDER

doesn't know who he really is) he is met by Valeria the Insect Sorceress who seduces him and nearly kills him. Rescued by the Faceless Ones, he is taken before the seer, Lugulbanda, who explains who he is and what his mission will be. To this end he is remanded to the custody of Sargon, the warrior-maiden, whose task will be to teach him the intricacies of mind-to-mind warfare. With this accomplished, the two, Cumulus and Sargon, set out after the mad Prince Chaos who is attempting the destruction of the Cosmos After numerous adventures, one of which results in the loss of Sargon, Cumulus finally faces Chaos and, after beating him in combat, is tricked into a teleportation tube for (apparent) return to Earth. However, the look on Chaos' face tells us he has something far more evil in his twisted mind. Here, the play ends, leaving us to wonder what happens next, all of which, we are told, will be revealed in WARP II

Of course this is only the barest outline of what happens, I will not attempt to describe: The Games in which Cumulus is pitted against no less than five of the robotoid Faceless Ones; or the battle with Yggthion, when it becomes necessary for time itself to be reversed. I cannot aptly describe the serio-comedic aspect of Lugulbonda, who provides welcome comedic overtones, nor the battle with Chaos, as mind-blasts flash across the stage is a cosmic game of ping-pong. Suffice it to say that the special effects are incredible and the sound effects masterful, that the audience was awed and amazed at some of the things done on stage and walked out of the theater with a profound feeling of having been *entertained.* The preview of WARP was highly successful

Feb. 14; opening night. The crowd here is somewhat different. A full contingent of critics is on hand of course, and the usual Broadway first-nighters, well-dressed and obviously well-heeled. The audience is older, but, hopefully not hostile. The performance is excellent, the actors respond favorably to the audience and everything goes on the numbers. As with the preview the audience has a marvelous time, oohing and ahing at the appropriate moments, and giving a resounding round of applause at the conclusion of the show. Success?

First reviews, as usual, are on the TV that very night. Perhaps the most influential of the TV critics is Kevin Sanders of ABC; his feelings on WARP are typical of most critics; "WARP is," he states, "a comic-book come to life." Further, he explains, "Comic-books are greasy kid-stuff." His conclusion; "WARP is bad theater.'

The other TV critics follow suit. Comic books are bad, they say, therefore, *ipso facto,* WARP is bad. No critique of acting, of set, of *entertainment value,* merely the damning of a genre by rote

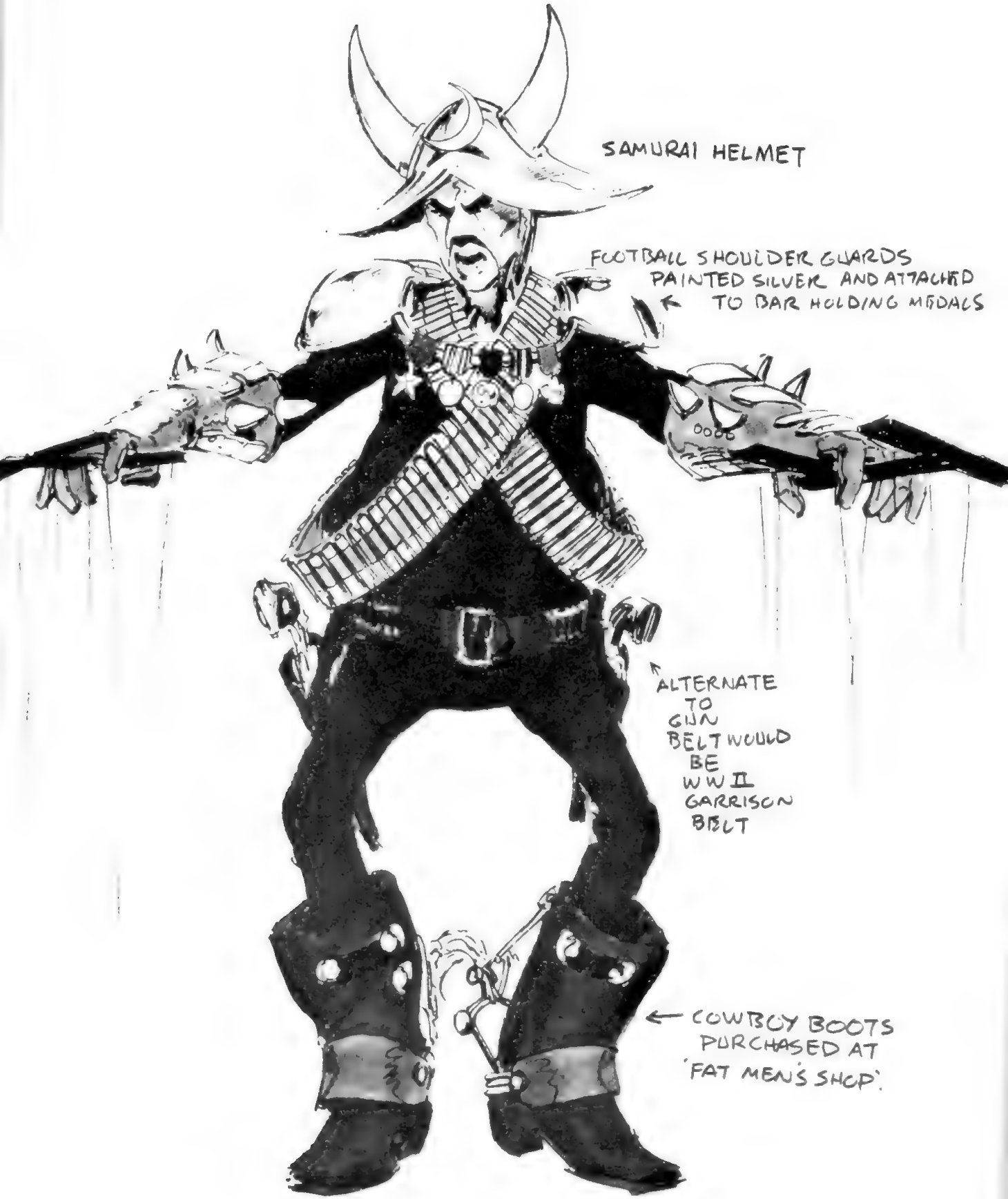
Newspaper reviews, the next day, continue the theme, and expand upon it; "While I have no respect for the taste of people who enjoy or understand science-fiction," writes Richard Watts of the New York Post. "I stand in virtual awe of their cerebral equipment I never have more than the vaguest conception of what's going on." It astounds me that such a man, with an avowed inability to understand sci-fi, should allow himself to review a play *billed as* science fiction. This smacks of dishonesty, not only to WARP, but to his readers.

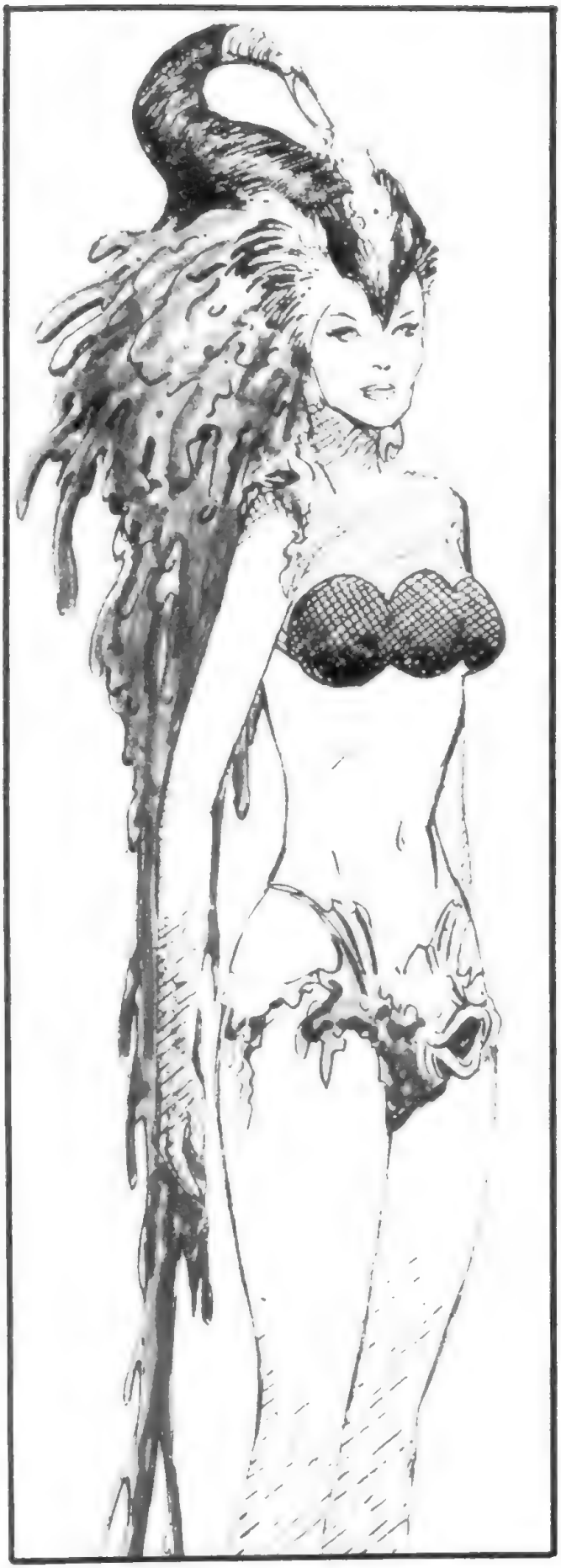
Of course not all the reviewers feel this way. The influential Clive Barnes of the New York Times saw WARP as "A lot of fun Undeniably cleverly done. Go with friends." And the Wall Street Journal's Edwin Wilson positively raved; "It comes on like Gangbusters!"

But the damage was done. Today's theatregoers rely primarily on television to tell them what is good and what is not. Sales of WARP tickets fell off, and Mr. D'Amato decided to get out while the getting was good. On February 18, WARP played its final performance, and at present sits in Limbo

But there is yet hope. The backers and members of the Organic want to reopen off-Broadway. A theater is available and the only thing holding up a revival is Mr. D'Amato. It is still possible that

DAGON


SAMURAI HELMET
FOOTBALL SHOULDER GUARDS PAINTED SILVER AND ATTACHED TO BAR HOLDING MEDALS
ALTERNATE TO GUN BELT WOULD BE WW II GARRISON BELT
COWBOY BOOTS PURCHASED AT 'FAT MEN'S SHOP'



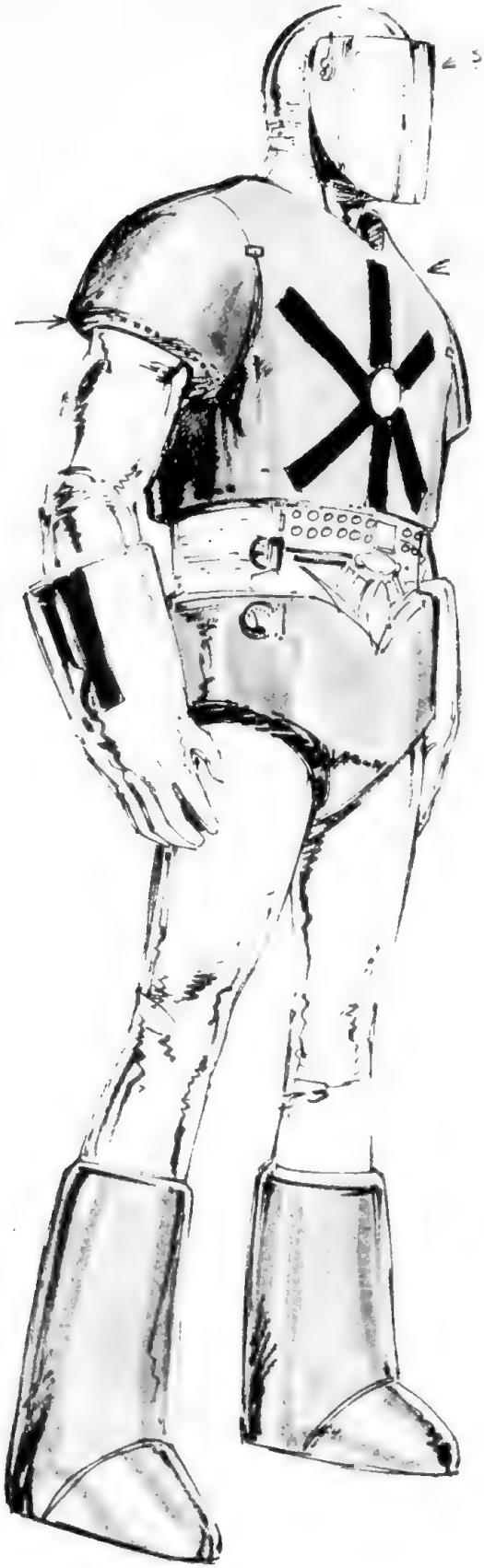
WARP will go on to be the success it richly deserves to be. But for the present, no one knows what will happen.

One final question; why do reviewers, with a pre-conceived dislike of a certain subject (in this case sci-fi and the comic book) attend *and* review a show *advertised* as the very thing they hate? Is this not dishonest? Is this not a form of censorship? Surely more impartial men could be found. Further, how can a man in the midst of a yelling, applauding crowd, obviously enjoying itself ("Out of the 1100 people who saw WARP opening night, 8 didn't like it; 6 of them were critics"—Neal Adams) plan a review panning this show? An interesting question, and one that members of the sci-fi/comic world will have to find an answer to as more and more opportunities for the field open in the multi-media.

— Doug Murray
illos by Neal Adams

Note: Doug Murray is co-publisher and the brains behind Heritage, one of the few professional books still out on the market. He collects art incessantly; gallery quantities of original artwork is his spare time hobby; he talks of radar scanning (his job) as if it was for normal humans.

FACELESS ONES

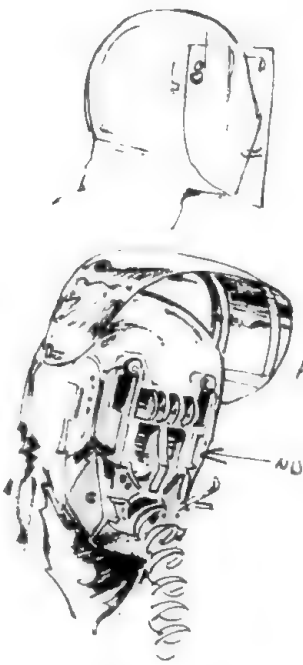


SILVERED TWO WAY MIRROR PLASTIC (HINGED AT TEMPLES)

THIS IS THAT KIND OF RUBBER PADDING (WITH A SMOOTH ALMOST HARD SURFACE) THAT IS USED IN PADDED SEATS OR CHAIRS

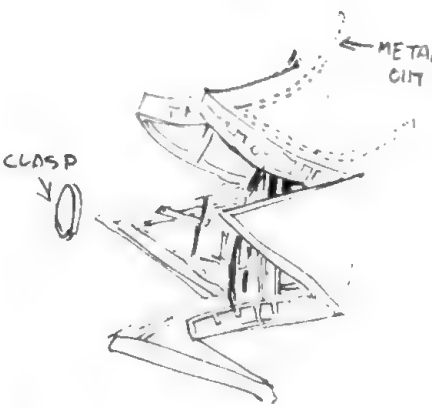
EDGE IS SILVERED WITH PAINTED ON CIRCUITRY.

SAME RUBBER MATERIAL ATTATCHED TO STANDARD BOOT



ANDROID NO 1.

NUTS & BOLTS IN THIS AREA FALL OUT AS FACE PLATE IS KNOCKED UPWARD



METAL SPRINGS WHICH POP OUT WHEN CLASP IS RELEASED

CLASP

VIEWPOINT

VIEWPOINTS

Letters are an important part of our magazine. For us, it is the most enjoyable. We would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our readers who took the time to write us with their comments on our fourth issue. We feel we present an honest representation of the letters we receive, and we look forward to hearing from you concerning this issue. As we have stated in the past, the response has been in simple mathematics, poor, so please take the time and write to us when you finish this issue. By the way, address your missives to either Gary or Adam.

Dear Gary and Adam,

Issue number four was well worth the wait. The covers by Richard Corben and Larry Todd were fantastic. Especially Corben's as his color has always been great. I'd like to see a strip or an interview with him in number five if possible. *We have honestly tried to get a strip from him, unfortunately his schedule is too crowded so you'll have to settle for the single illustrations we present — ED NOTE*

It was also interesting to note the differences between the pencil version in Infinity Three and the inked version in number Four of the Jeff Jones sketch. It lost a little something but they always do.

The article on underground comix was very informative. I have seen a few of these (one being Richard Corben's *Rowlf*). They seem to be heading in the right direction and I would very much like to see more of them like *Slow Death* and *Rowlf*.

The Brunner portfolio was fantastic as was most of the art in the issue, with special mention to M. W. Kaluta, Berni Wrightson and Gray Morrow.

The "New Beginning" reprint was very good art wise. However, it seemed cramped and crowded because of the paneling. Also, it's a little out of place in Infinity.

It seems that changing printers was a good choice, for this issue was the most professional and together Infiinty yet.

Best wishes,
Bob Felstead

Thanks for the nice comments, Bob. In our opinion the covers of Infinity Four were the highlight of that issue. We don't feel that the EC reprint was out of place in Infinity Four, and in fact many of our readers had been requesting another reprint from the old ECs since issue number one. Unfortunately further reprints are impossible because the rights have been sold to another company and they will not allow continued reprinting. Perhaps you have seen some of the fine EC comic reprints now out. Underground comix are improving, and are heading more in the right direction than the industry's. We're happy to say that Richard Corben is leading the way . . . We have again changed printers with this issue, and hopefully this will be an improvement.

Dear Adam,

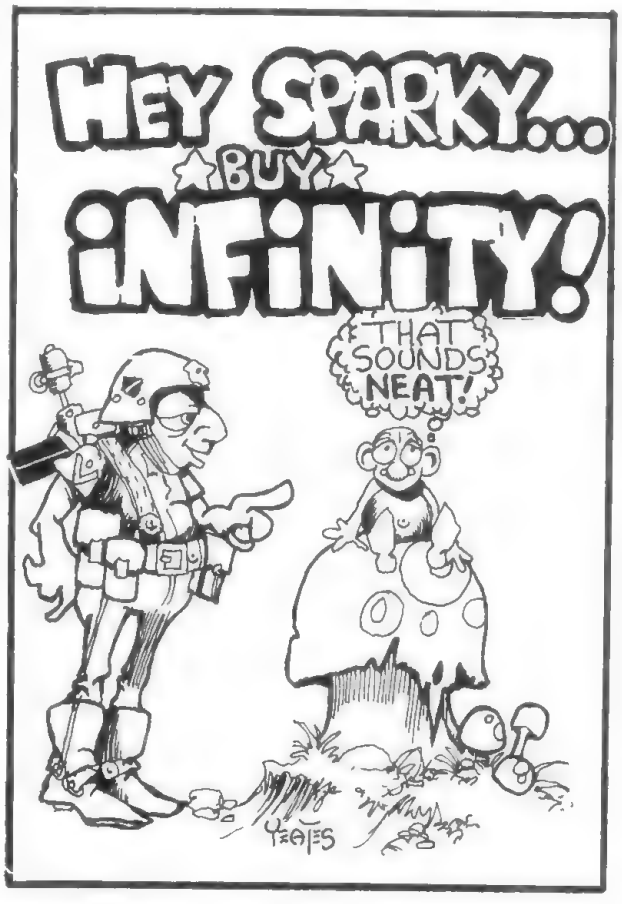
I've just acquired a copy of your fourth issue of INFINITY. To put it mildly, I was quite pleasantly surprised. I remember the ad some time ago in RB-CC for your first issue. I remember paying $1.75 for what the ad promised. Unfortunately, the fanzine I got was quite the opposite of what I had expected. Since that traumatic experience, I had restrained myself from purchasing any of the succeeding *INFINITIES*, no matter *how* alluring the ad. Then one day, as I was strolling along Hucksters Avenue at a comicon my sharply honed eyes spied a colorful Corben cover gracing a magazine labelled *INFINITY FOUR*. "Surely," I thought, "this can't be the same *INFINITY* which I had first wasted my money on." I flipped through the pages and gave Phil Seuling three of my hard-won greenbacks. Needless to say, you've improved since that first issue. The extent of your improvement is evidenced by the fact that a drawing that once sufficed as your cover (Wrightson's pointed eared barbarian) is now reprinted as a random full-page illo.

"A Phenomenon" was, as you said, "a masterwork of writing."

I enjoyed the artwork which graced your inside pages, particularly Dollens' "Above the Clouds of Venus." I wish I could have seen it in color to further enhance its surrealistic atmosphere.

The by now mandatory (and thankfully so) Wrightson, Morrow and Brunner pieces also intrigued me. I can never tire of their fine work. . . . The Harper interview was beautiful. I loved it! Rather than just being interesting it was *entertaining*, too! Please, let's have more like it.

Best —
Joe Rusnak



C. YEATES

Thanks for the nice comments, Joe. It seems that a lot of people who were turned off by our first issue are back with us now and we're glad to have them. We have always said give publications a second chance, the first time around is really tough. We're glad you liked the Harper interview. It was something new and different that did not meet with overwhelming approval, but we are glad we at least tried it.

Dear Gary,

The copy of Infinity four which I recently received was so fantastic that I felt compelled to write and compliment you on the superb job you have done. Infinity may very well be better than either *Phase* or *Heritage*. Must number five be the last? Anyway, if it's as good as number four it should be the prize of the year.

Dave Vineyard

Maybe Infinity five won't be the last. But thanks for the kind words, we're blushing.

Guys —

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank you for Infinity. It is the one zine I most look forward to receiving. All that beautiful art and those informative and enjoyable interviews are a great help and inspiration to me in my own artistic endeavors. Thanks and best of luck with Infinity.

Peace,
Jim Rehak

It's too bad these last three letters didn't come on the same day!

Gary,

I must take this opportunity to congratulate you on *Infinity Four*. It is truly the greatest mag, zine or whatever, that I have ever seen. I am very sorry to hear that the next issue will be your last. It's almost a crime. Number three sold me on number four and number four guarantees you a sale on number five.

Thank you for a great zine.

Best,
Mike Lovinger

Mike has been a loyal supporter of Infinity for quite some time now, and we are grateful. Continued praise like his makes it all worthwhile. As you now know we have changed our minds on concluding Infinity's run with number five. We are attempting to achieve the once a year schedule, a schedule that allows us time for everything including our yearly convention, Creation.

Dear Gary and Adam,

The delay in my comments is unfortunate, but not inexcusable; time has been increasingly impossible to find, lately. I had *Infinity Four* read the day I received it, but just now got around to this letter.

I am, in a word, disappointed.

For the most part the contents are on an equally high level with previous issues, but I'm not at all happy with the printing. It seems, in any number of places, substandard, a fact which I find difficult to accept, after the remarkably good printing of *Infinity Three*. It's obvious — especially in the printing of Kenneth Smiths's logos; where there was fine line in issue three, there's medium-soft blur in issue four. Same with the Schuster drawing on the inside front cover. The drawing, for all intents and purposes, was barely able

to be seen. Surely, there must have been something else more presentable

Jaxon's article on underground comix was excellent! Though it's reasonably complete, it's not quite as comprehensive as I'd hoped However, his perspective is a unique one, and he's a very good writer. I'd think putting *A Phenomenon* together with the *Playboy* article a few years ago would provide some very fine insight into the Undergrounds, even more so now that comix aren't totally dependent on sex and violence. (At least *Playboy* had some color plates, though; and the *Snatch* and *Zap* issue long before they were put back in print.)

Jan Strnad does some damn good writing, and *Island Fable* is no exception. I doubt if it's strong enough to sell to a pro market, even as a graphic story, but the quality is there. It's always nice to see a Strnad story, anyway. I do wish you'd have gotten someone to illustrate it, as opposed to sticking some Krenkel sketches and the Jeff Jones rough just to take up some space. Articles are different, but short stories do need an illustration somewhere

What actually caused the disappointment was the artwork, overall, seemed terribly disjointed. There were reprints which I thought senseless, and some — Clyde Caldwell's illo in the New York Con's convention book was heads above his illo here — were far below standard. The Morrow stuff however was excellent

What does bother me is that many of the good illustrations were unsigned and uncredited, which seems rather unfair

Cheers,
Dave Dapkewicz

Concerning printing of last year's Infinity Four, there certainly has been a conflict over the job's quality. The reason the Ken Smith logo's were affected is because the first time printing was done from the originals, the second time it was done from a copy of the original. This could not be avoided. We could blame the entire printing situation on two words — Al Schuster. Some of you know that Al runs the Star Trek Convention, and does a good job at it. His good jobs end there as we found out when he was supposedly printing issue four. He put us six months off schedule with his delays and lying and cost us several hundred dollars worth of orders. When it became obvious that this was a case of the crooked printer we grabbed what little work he had done as well as the originals and went elsewhere. What Al did was underhanded and simply illegal. We at least learned a lesson, a valuable one at that Because we were being pressured by dealers who had ordered in

advance we were forced to get a rush job on the printing, which accounts for the thin paper, and poor halftones in some places And we couldn't be too lavish with the money because we didn't have any to be lavish with. To this day Al owes us several hundred dollars, he is unable to pay and must work it off by giving us free tables at his conventions. Take it from us, be careful when you deal with a con artist. And we mean it. We became so aggravated at one point, that we considered giving it all up . . . Concerning the illustrating of Jan's stories we have written to him and he prefers we leave them unillustrated. This is what we have done with this issue's piece.

You say the artwork seems disjointed? Perhaps, but we didn't note this at all. It is probably a subjective matter

The reprints were not senseless — the EC reprint was a valuable idea and was done because we were requested by many of our readers to do so.

I'm sure Jaxon will be pleased with the comparison of his work with that of Playboy's. We however cannot afford color plates, as you no doubt realize

We have taken care of the unsigned artwork problem with our illustration index

Thank you for your opinions, hope to hear from you on this issue

Dear Gary

Thanks for the copy of *Infinity four*. Overall I'd say it's a very nice issue. The Corben cover is fantastic — really superb. Wish I could say as much for the Todd back cover. Although well done, it looked like a quickie job of a cutsie idea. I think my color drawing would have gone better on the back cover (But of course I'm prejudiced). *(We know — ed note.)*

The quality varied — Brunner's work was fantastic. Kaluta's strip was nice, but I really would have rather seen it straight. Wrightson's wash drawing was nice. Also — some of the Morrow half-tones didn't turn out too well either — were they in color?

Sincerely,
Clyde Caldwell

The Morrow pieces were in color. We can't agree with you on the Todd back cover piece — we really dug it. Hopefully we will be printing more of Clyde's fine artwork in the future.

Dear Adam and Gary,

Thanks for the copy of number four.

Apart from minor typos and that sort of thing, I was pleased with the presentation of my article. I regret that you didn't have room for more of the panels I sent, since they were the only place that actual names of the various artists were mentioned. Also, I thought it a bit strange that you would devote two full pages to two covers, both of which are still readily available in full color. Anyway, thanks for not abridging the text, which was my main concern

I'd appreciate it if you'd send me at least 10 prime copies of Infinity Four. Rest assured they'll be placed among fellow cartoonists out here, many of whom aren't hip to the great stuff you're doing.

Regards,
Jaxon

We've received nothing but positive comments on the article Jaxon wrote for us last issue; after our 10th reading there are still many new things to be gathered from it

Dear Gary and Adam —

Let me start off with congratulations on Infinity Four. The cover by Corben was very good as was the reproduction. I must say it was excellent. "Fastest Gun In The West" looks like Gray Morrow's work — who is Mooney? *(Mooney is Gerry Mooney — a fan artist, whose work is quite good in our opinion. — ED NOTE)* As I have just recently become interested in underground comix, "A Phenomenon" was quite helpful. I must say I was impressed by the Brunner portfolio. This is better work than he did in issue three

The Steve Harper piece was good, interesting too. Never having seen stuff from the old ECs, "A New Beginning" was an excellent idea. Todd's back cover was very well done, one of the highlights of the issue.

Sincerely
Garth Danielson

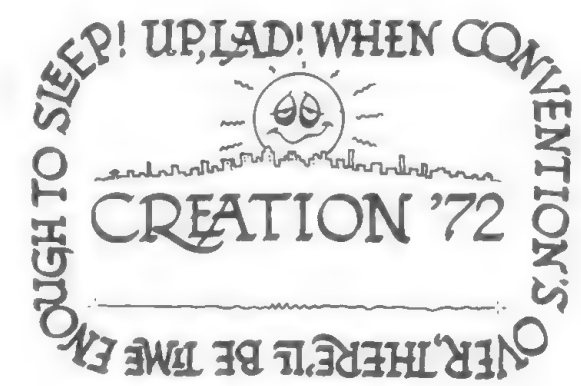
Thank you for the nice comments. On printing fan art such as Mooney's strip last year, we feel this is an important part of Infinity. Although we have no fan art at all this issue we want to continue to print fan material — but only good fan material. If you think you can match what we print — send it to us. We however are not responsible for the material, and it cannot be returned unless sufficient postage and an envelope is provided. If it's good enough we will pay our standard rates for the artwork.

Steve Harper's interview was controversial as far as readers opinions went, as well as the reviews we received in other publications. It was an interesting idea, at the least. We are glad to have Frank Brunner back this issue — we have always felt he has done his best work for us — always on schedule and always beautiful

That about wraps it up — another issue gone by. We await your comments on number five eagerly. Why not take the time now, and write to us. We're selling 3,000 copies per issue now and receiving less than twenty letters of comment per issue! You can do better than that! How about it?

If you are intereted in attending Creation and want more information, write to Adam. Until next issue, fare thee well

Gary and Adam



Gary Berman, 197-50F
Peck Ave. Flushing,
NY 11365
Adam Malin, 16E. 2nd
St. Freeport, NY 11520

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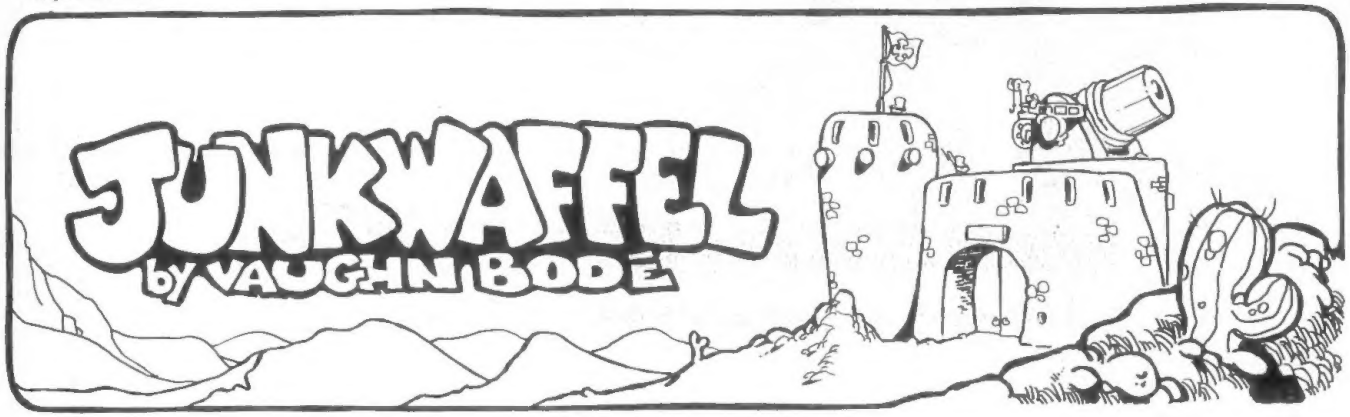
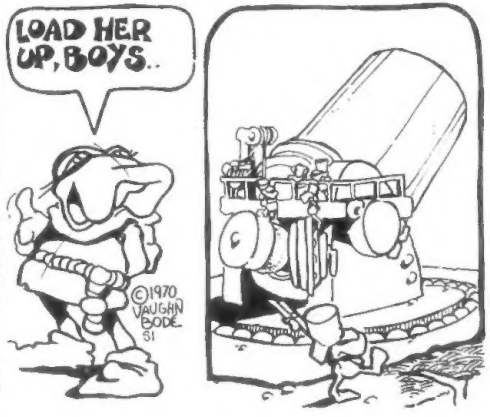
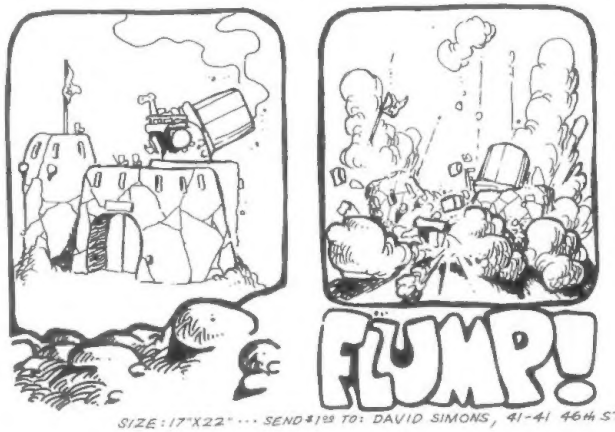
by VAUGHN BODE



I GOTS A BUDDY WHO LIVES OVER DA MOUNTAIN IN DA TOWN OF EL BABBEL. I THOUGHTS WE MIGHT DROP IT IN ON HIM FOR LAUGHS...
HEY, THAT'S A FUNNY IDEA, THIS WILL REALLY KILL EM'...



DO BURP, DIS IS YOUR FORT AN YOUR CANNON.. YOU GETS TO PULL DA' FIRING STRING....
THANK YOUSE, POP... YA' BETTER BLOCK YOU EARS CAUSE HERE GOES..



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